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THE HISTORY OF ANCIENT GREECE,

ITS COLONIES, AND CONQUESTS;

Part the First;

FROM THE EARLIEST ACCOUNTS

TILL THE

DIVISION OF THE MACEDONIAN EMPIRE

IN THE EAST;

INCLUDING THE HISTORY OF

LITERATURE, PHILOSOPHY, AND THE FINE ARTS.

By JOHN GILLIES, LL.D.

F.R.S. AND S.A. LONDON, F.R.S. EDINBURGH, INSTIT. SOC. PARIS, AND ACADEM. REGIÆ SCIENC. GOTTING. CORRESP. AND HISTORIOGRAPHER TO HIS MAJESTY FOR SCOTLAND.

Εκ μεν τοινυν της απαντων προς αλληλα συμπλοκης και παραθεσεως, ετι δε ομοιοτητος και διαφορας, μαλιστ' αν τις εφικοιτο, και δυνηθειη καταπτευσας, αμα και το χρησιμον και το τερπνον εκ της ιστοριας λαβειν. POLYBIUS, l. i. c. v.

THE SIXTH EDITION.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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TO

THE KING.

SIR,

THE History of Greece exposes the dangerous turbulence of Democracy, and arraigns the despotism of Tyrants. By describing the incurable evils inherent in every form of Republican policy, it evinces the inestimable benefits, resulting to Liberty itself, from the lawful dominion of hereditary Kings, and the steady operation of well-regulated Monarchy. With singular propriety, therefore, the present Work may be respectfully offered to Your MAJESTY, as Sovereign of the freest nation upon earth; and *that* Sovereign, through whose discern-

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ing munificence, the interest of those liberal arts, which distinguished and ennobled Greece beyond all other countries of antiquity, has been more successfully promoted in Your MAJESTY's dominions, than during any former period in the British annals. That Your MAJESTY may long reign the illustrious Guardian of public freedom, and the unrivalled Patron of useful learning, is the fervent prayer of

YOUR MAJESTY'S

Most dutiful Subject and Servant,

JOHN GILLIES.

LONDON,
FEB. 10, 1786.

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PREFACE.

THE following History commences with the infancy of Greece, and describes its gradual advancement towards civilization and power. But the main design of my work is confined to the space of seven centuries, which elapsed from the settlement of the Ionians in Asia Minor till the establishment of the Macedonian empire in the East; during which memorable period, the arts and arms of the Greeks, conspiring to excite the admiration and terror of the ancient world, justly merit the attentive study of the present age, and posterity. In the general revolutions of their national confederacy, which, though always loose and imperfect, was never altogether dissolved, I have interwoven the description and principal transactions of each independent republic, however small or inconsiderable; and, by comparing authors seldom read, and not frequently consulted for historical materials, have endeavoured to trace the intricate series, and to explain the secret connection, of seemingly detached events, in order to reduce the scattered members of Grecian story into one perpetual, unbroken

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narrative; a design, difficult indeed, and new, yet evidently well calculated to promote the great purposes of pleasure and utility.

In the view which I have taken of my subject, the fluctuation of public affairs, and the vicissitudes of war and fortune, appear scarcely the most splendid, and surely not the most interesting, portion of Grecian History. By genius and fancy, not less than by patriotism and prowess, the Greeks are honourably distinguished among the nations of the earth. By the Greeks, and by them alone, Literature, Philosophy, and the Fine Arts, were treated as important concerns of state, and employed as powerful engines of policy. From their literary glory, not only their civil, but even their military transactions, derive their chief importance and dignity. To complete, therefore, my present undertaking, it seemed necessary to unite the history of arts with that of empire, and to combine with the external revolutions of war and government, the intellectual improvements of men, and the ever-varying picture of human opinions and manners.

In the execution of this extensive plan, might I assume any merit to myself, it would be that of having diligently studied the Greek writers, without adopting their prejudices, or copying their narratives with servility. Many events, highly interesting to the citizens of Athens or of Sparta, now interest no more; concerning many important transactions, anciently too familiar to be explained, the Modern Reader will reasonably

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expect information. On some occasions, therefore, I found it necessary to concentrate and abridge; on others to dilate and expatiate; but have never sacrificed that due relation of parts to the whole, and to each other, or violated that unity of design which I was ambitious to attain in the present History, by condescending to copy or translate. In the Work throughout, I have ventured to think for myself; and my opinions, whether well or ill founded, are, at least, my own.

The present History was undertaken, and a considerable part of it written, many years ago, by the advice of some persons of taste and learning, who, having read my historical introduction to the Orations of Lysias and Isocrates, wished to see the whole series of Grecian story treated on the same plan. My situation, and my leisure, enabled me to meet their wish; but before my manuscript was prepared for the Press, my studies were interrupted by the only employment, not enjoined by some positive duty, which I should have *allowed* (such are the sanguine hopes of authors!) to suspend my literary labours. During that long interval, different portions of Grecian History have been ably treated in English, as well as in * foreign languages. Yet, as

* Among the foreign works, I distinguish with pleasure those of Mr. Meiners, of Gottingen. To the author of this History it would be very flattering to find the opinions which he hazarded in his introduction to Lysias, confirmed in a subsequent work of such a respectable scholar as Mr. Meiners (see his Geschichte des Luxus der Athenienser, Lemgo 1782), were it not extremely natural

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most of those works still remain incomplete, and as none of them embrace the whole extent of my subject, or at all pre-occupy my plan, I venture to offer the present History, deeply sensible as I am of its imperfections, to the indulgence of the public.

that writers, who draw from the same sources, should advance the same facts, and deduce similar conclusions. In the following History, my views of the *Pythagorean band*, and of the *Platonic philosophy*, though sufficiently remote from vulgar opinion, nearly coincide with those of Mr. Meiners, in his Geschichte des Ursprungs, Fortgangs, and Verfalls der Wissenchafften in Griechenland; that is, "The History of the Origin, Progress, and Decay of Philosophy in Greece:" a work not yet completed, but which, as far as it extends, I will venture to recommend as one of the most valuable and accurate treasuries of Greek learning contained in any modern tongue.

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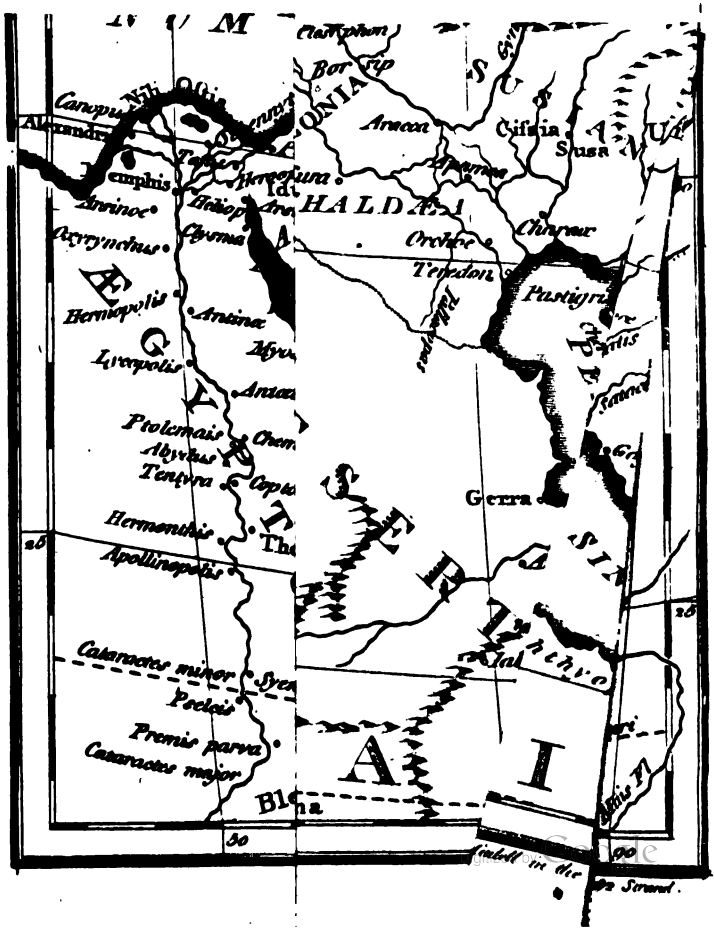
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Ctesiphon
Borsip
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Chyma
Orchoe
Chaldraeus
Teredon
Pasitigris
Hermopolis
Antinoe
Lycopolis
Ptolemais
Abydus
Tentyra
Hermonthis
Apollinopolis
Cataractes minor
Syene
Pselcis
Premis parva
Cataractes major
Berenice
Gerra
Sinus Arabicus
Mare Rubrum
Ethiopia
Africa
Libia Interior
Simbell in der
Syrand.

THE

HISTORY

OF

ANCIENT GREECE.

CHAP. I.

View of the Progress of Civilization and Power in Greece, preceding the Trojan War. — History of that War. — Its Consequences.

CHAP. I. Introduction.

In the infancy of society, men are occupied with the business of the present hour, forgetful of the past, and careless of the future. They have neither ability nor inclination to contemplate their public transactions in the impartial light of history, far less to treasure and to record them. Their recent victories over hostile tribes are celebrated in the artless song[1], or commemorated by the rude monument; but to preserve any regular series of connected events, is a design, which they enjoy not the means to execute, scarcely the capacity to comprehend.

[1] Tacit. Annal. l. iv. c. 43.

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Their simple and obscure adventures, which thus pass unremembered by themselves, rarely excite the inquisitive curiosity of their more cultivated neighbours. In remote ages of the world, one people became an object of attention to another, only as they became considerable; for, until the full maturity of Grecian refinement, the most polished nations of antiquity attempted not to investigate the nature and powers of man in the untutored efforts of savage life. The daring spirit, and fierce incursions, of the Barbarians in the east of Europe, excited terror and consternation among the more civilized and more effeminate inhabitants of Lesser Asia [2]; but the luxurious pride of the latter never condescended to examine the origin and history of the people who were occasionally the object of their fears. The only circumstantial information concerning both the Asiatics and the Europeans, must be derived from the early historians of Greece; and when we reflect on the innumerable causes which conspire to bury in oblivion the exploits of rising communities, there is reason to wonder that we should know so much concerning the ancient state of that country, rather than to regret that our knowledge is imperfect.

It must be allowed, however, that our materials for the first portion of Grecian history, are rather

[2] The Lydians, Phrygians, &c. History and Fable attest the early civilization, the wealth, and wickedness, of those nations. See particularly Herodotus, l. i. c. 93. & seq. and Strabo, l. xi. p. 532. & seq. and l. xii. and xiii. p. 572.

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copious than consistent.[3] The subject, indeed, is such, as a very cautious writer would choose entirely to avoid, since, whatever authorities he fol-

[3] It is sufficient to read Thucydides's introduction to his admired history of the Peloponnesian war, to perceive how little correct information could be obtained by that diligent inquirer into the antiquities of his country. If we admit the common chronology, there is reason to believe that the scattered fragments of Grecian history were preserved, during thirteen centuries, by oral tradition. The tales or rhapsodies of the ἀοιδοι, or bards, were succeeded by those of the Cyclic poets, of whom an account is given in Casaubon ad Athenæum, l. vii. c. 4. Salmas. in Solin. & Schwarzius Altdorf in Diss. de Poetis Cyclicis. Composition in prose began with the use of alphabetic writing about six centuries before Christ. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. v. c. 29. The first prose writers, or more properly the first *writers* were, Pherecydes of Syros; Acusilaus of Argos; Hellanicus *of Lesbos*; Hecatæus, and Dionysius, both of Miletus; the last of whom flourished in the 65th Olymp. 520 B. C. and immediately preceded Herodotus. From the work of Herodotus, which forms, as it were, the shade between Epic Poetry and History, we may judge of the writings of his predecessors; from whom, and from the Cyclic poets, Anaximenes of Lampsacus, who lived in the time of Alexander the Great, and Diodorus Siculus, who lived in the time of Julius Cæsar, compiled the first books of their very extensive but inaccurate collections. Apollodorus, Hyginus, (and many others, whose works are now lost,) combined the more ancient records, whether in prose or verse, with the additions and embellishments of the lyric and tragic poets. When the Greek learning became known to the Romans, this compound of history and fable furnished the subject and the incidents of innumerable tragedies to Ennius, Accius, Livius Andronicus, &c. After the downfall of Rome, learning took refuge in the eastern world. The antiquities and early history of Greece again became objects of study among the natives of that country; but the heterogeneous mass of truth and fiction was rather amalgamated, than purified, by Malala, Cedrenus, Tzetza, Constantinus Menasses, and other Greeks of the middle ages. See Heine, Not. ad Æneid. IL and Vossius de Historic. Græcis. With few exceptions, the Greek writers may be pronounced extremely careless in matters of Chronology. Herodotus, who has been emphatically styled the father of profane history, commonly reckons by the ages of men. The accurate histories of Thucydides and Xenophon, where the time of each event is precisely ascertained, compre-

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CHAP. I.

lows, his narrative must, in some parts, be liable to objection.[4] Yet it seems essential to the integrity of the present work, to explain from what assemblage of nations the Greeks were formed, and by what fortunate steps they arrived, from feeble beginnings, to that condition of manners and society in which they are described by Homer; whose immortal poems, a meteor in the gloom of night, brighten, for a moment, the obscure antiquities of his country.

First inhabitants of Greece.

The traditions of the Greeks agree with the authentic records of sacred history, in representing the countries afterwards known by the names of Thrace, Macedon, and Greece, as peopled at an earlier period than any other portion of the western world. The southern corner of Europe, comprehended between the thirty-sixth and forty-first degrees of latitude, bordering on Epirus and Macedonia towards the north, and on other

hend no more than a period of seventy years. Even in their time chronology seems not to have been cultivated as a science, since the first specimen of that kind is said to have been given by Demetrius Phalereus, in his αρχοντων αναγραφη, about the middle of the fourth century before Christ. The labours of Demetrius were corrected and extended by Philocorus in his Ατθις. The historian Timæus, who flourished in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, first arranged his narrative in the order of Olympiads, which began 776 B. C. His contemporary Sosibius gave a work, intitled χρονων αναγραφη; Apollodorus wrote the συνταξις χρονικη; and on such chronologers rests the credit of all later compilers, as well as of the Arundelian Marbles, which were composed only 264 years before Christ.

[4] What Strabo (l. ix.) says of the first historians of Attica, "that they differed widely from each other (πολλα διαφερουσιν)," may be applied to all profane histories of those early times.

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sides surrounded by the sea, was inhabited above eighteen centuries before the Christian æra, by many small tribes of hunters and shepherds, among whom the Pelasgi and Hellenes were the most numerous and powerful.[5] The barbarous Pelasgi venerated Inachus as their founder; and, for a similar reason, the more humane Hellenes respected Deucalion. From his son Hellen, they derived their general appellation, which originally denoted a small tribe in Thessaly[6]; and from Dorus, Eolus, and Ion[7], his more remote descendants, they were discriminated by the names of Dorians, Eolians, and Ionians.[8] The Dorians took possession of that mountainous district of Greece, afterwards called Doris: the Ionians, whose name was gradually lost in the more illustrious appellation of Athenians, settled in the less barren parts of Attica: and the Eolians peopled Elis and Arcadia, the western and inland regions of the Peloponnesus.[9] Notwithstanding many partial emigrations, these three[10] original divisions of the Hellenes generally entertained an affection for the establishments which had been preferred by the wisdom or caprice of their respective ancestors; a circumstance which remarkably distinguished the *Hellenic* from the *Pelasgic* race. While the former discovered a degree of attachment to their na-

CHAP. I.

The Pelasgi and Hellenes.

The latter divided into Dorians, Eolians, and Ionians.

[5] Marm. Oxon. epoch. 6. Apollodor. Biblioth. l. ii.
[6] Thucydid. l. i. c. 28.
[7] Strabo, l. viii. p. 383.
[8] Herodot. l. i. c. 56. and l. vii. c. 94.
[9] Diodor. Siculus, l. v.
[10] Heraclid. Pont. apud Athenæum, l. xiv.

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tive land, seldom found in barbarians who live by hunting or pasturage, the latter, disdaining fixed habitations, wandered in large bodies over Greece, or transported themselves into the neighbouring islands; and the most considerable portion of them, gradually removing to the coast of Italy and Thrace, the remainder melted away into the Doric and Ionic tribes. At the distance of twelve centuries, obscure traces of the Pelasgi occurred in several Grecian cities; a district of Thessaly always retained their name; their colonies continued, in the fifth century before Christ, to inhabit the southern coast of Italy, and the shores of the Hellespont: and, in those widely separated countries, their ancient affinity was recognised in the uniformity of their rude dialect and barbarous manners, extremely dissimilar to the customs and language of their Grecian neighbours.[11]

Colonies from Egypt and the East.

Greece, when delivered from the turbulence of a rugged race of men, who never attained much consideration, either in the territories where they originally dwelt, or in those to which they afterwards removed, was not left to be slowly civilized by the progressive ingenuity of the Hellenic tribes. The happy position of a country, which, forming as it were the frontier of Europe with Asia, is divided only by narrow seas from Egypt and Syria, and situate within reach of those parts of the East which were anciently most flourishing and populous, naturally

[11] Herodot. l. i. Dionys. Halicarn. l. i. Pausan. l. viii.

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invited the visits of travellers, and attracted the establishment of colonies. These transient visits, or temporary settlements, were marked by many signal benefits, the memory of which was long preserved by the gratitude of Greece, and their merit probably exaggerated by her fondness for panegyric. Even those Grecian communities, which justly claimed the honour of superior antiquity, acknowledged themselves indebted to strangers for the most important discoveries, not only in religion, but in agriculture and the arts; and contented themselves with the glory of having diffused a borrowed light over the melancholy gloom of ignorance which overspread their neighbours.[12] But national vanity at length produced a material change in the tradition. When the refined descendants of the rude Greeks viewed with complacence their own superiority in arts and arms to all the nations around them, they began to suspect that the Gods alone were worthy to have reared the infancy of a people, who eminently excelled the rest of mankind. To the Gods they transferred the merit of the many useful inventions communicated by the generous humanity of their ancient visitants; an ostentatious fiction, coloured by a faint semblance of truth, since the worship of several divinities was introduced at the same time, and by the same persons[13], who made known the

[12] Isocrat. Panegyr. passim.

[13] The Tytans, Idæi Dactyli, Triptolemus, &c. Compare Diodor Sicul. l. v. and Isocrat, Panegyr.

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CHAP. I.

arts most subservient to the purposes of human life.[14]

New colonies from the same countries.

While fable thus disguised the benefits conferred by the first transitory voyages into Greece, history preserved the memory of four permanent establishments, formed successively in that country by foreigners. From the middle of the sixteenth, to the middle of the fourteenth century before Christ, an inundation of Egyptians, Phenicians, and Phrygians overflowed the Hellenic coasts. The causes assigned for these emigrations are highly consonant to the manners of remote antiquity, as described by sacred and profane authors: hatred of a rival, impatience of a superior, in one instance the persecution of a brother and an enemy, and, in general, that uneasy restlessness of disposition, which universally prevails among men, who have become sensible of their own powers, without having sufficiently learned to direct them to the happy pursuits of arts and industry.[15] The principal colonies were conducted by Cecrops[16] and Danaus, Egyptians, who respectively settled in Athens and
A. C. 1556. Argos; Cadmus[17], a Phenician, who founded
1485.
1493. Thebes in Bœotia; and Pelops, a Phrygian[18],
1350. whose descendants intermarrying with those of Danaus, King of Argos, and Tyndareus, King of Lacedæmon or Sparta, acquired in the person of

[14] Diodor. Sicul. l. v. Isocrat. Panegyr.
[15] Isocrat. Hellen. sub initio. Pind. Olymp. 1.
[16] Strabo, l. ix. and Plut. in Theseo.
[17] Strabo, ibid. and Isocrat. Hellen.
[18] Isocrat. Panathen. Thucydid. l. i. Diodor. l. iv.

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Agamemnon so powerful an ascendant in the Peloponnesus.[19] The family of Deucalion still reigned in Thessaly; but Thebes, Athens, Argos, and Sparta, which were long regarded as the principal cities of Greece, thus fell under the dominion of four foreign lines of princes, whose exploits, and glory, and misfortunes, are immortalized by the first and noblest productions of Grecian genius.[20]

Improvements introduced by these colonies into Greece.

The countries, which these adventurers abandoned, had not, according to modern ideas, attained a very high degree of maturity in laws and government. It cannot, however, be doubted, that the natives of Egypt and the East were acquainted with many improvements unknown to the Hellenic tribes. Conjectures are not to be placed in the rank of facts; yet, in matters so ancient and obscure, we may be allowed to conjecture from the only facts on record, that the invaders of Greece introduced into that country the knowledge of the Phenician alphabet; improved the practice of agriculture; multiplied the rites of religion; discovered to the Greeks several uses of the metals; but, on the other hand, gradually adopted, in their turn, the Grecian language, and gene-

[19] Thucyd. l. i. Diodor. l. iv. Isocrat. Panathen.

[20] The works of Homer and Pindar, and the writings of the Greek tragedians. In these, and scarcely any where else, the stories of Cadmus, Semele, Bacchus, Amphitryon, Hercules, Oedipus, &c. may be read with pleasure and advantage; for as Strabo, l. ix. says, "All there is monstrous and tragic land."

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CHAP. I.

rally conformed to the Grecian customs and institutions.[21]

The Phenician alphabet.

The introduction of the Phenician alphabet was an improvement too delicate and refined to be immediately attended with any important consequences. The gross understandings of the Hellenes could not easily comprehend the utility of such an ingenious invention. The knowledge of it was acquired and preserved by a few individuals[22] of more enlightened minds: but the far greater part of the nation long contented themselves with the ancient mode of picture-writing, which, however limited in its application, seemed sufficient to express the simplicity of their rude ideas.

Several uses of the metals.

The Phenicians were well acquainted with the precious metals as the medium of exchange. But the uniform transactions of the Greeks, as yet required not any such nicety of refinement. Even during the Trojan war, cattle, being the

[21] Compare Herodotus, l. v. c. 59. l. vii. passim. Montfaucon, Palæograph. Græc. l. ii. Plin. l. v. c. 56 & 57. Hyginus, Fab. 274. and Ephorus apud Diodor. l. v.

[22] Herodotus mentions three inscriptions on three tripods, consecrated in the temple of Ismenian Apollo. The first, of Amphitryon; the second, of the son of Hippocoon; the third, of Laodamus the son of Eteocles. The inscriptions on the shields of the heroes who besieged the capital of Eteocles, are noticed by Æschylus, in his tragedy intitled, "The Seven against Thebes." Yet we know from Homer, Iliad vi. that when Prætus sent Bellerophon to the King of Lycia, he gave him, not a written letter, but σηματα λυγρα, mournful signs. Writing could not be common till many centuries afterwards, since the first written laws were given in Greece only six centuries before Christ. Herodot. l. ii. Strabo, l. vi.

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commodity of most general demand, was universally regarded as the most convenient measure of value.[28] It is not easy to determine whether gold or iron be more advantageous to man, the one by exciting his industry, the other by seconding that industry in all the variety of useful arts. The discovery of iron in Greece afforded the necessary implements of agriculture, the gradual extension of which alike improved the sterility of the soil, and the rudeness of the inhabitants. Before the arrival of Egyptian colonies, the cultivation of the ground might occasionally employ the divided industry of scattered families; but this valuable art was not considered

Extension of agriculture.

[28] In a well-known passage, Homer, after mentioning other articles with which the Greeks purchased wine, adds, αυτοισι βοεσσι, "with oxen themselves." Some scholiasts and commentators have imagined, that the βους of Homer was a coin stamped with the figure of an ox, said to have been introduced by Theseus. Vid. Plut. in Theseo. But were it allowed, which is very improbable, that Theseus had a mint, it would still be improbable that Homer meant such a coin; for, in the episode of Glaucus and Diomed, he says, that the former gave his golden armour, worth a hundred oxen, for the brazen armour of the latter, worth only nine. Now we know from Pollux, Onomast. l. ix. c. 7. that the coin βους, at whatsoever time it was introduced, continued to be valued at two drachmas. Diomed's arms, therefore, upon the supposition of the scholiasts, must have been worth about nine shillings; and Glaucus's, which were of massy gold, worth only nine pounds. Talents of gold are often mentioned by Homer. They were proposed as prizes to combatants, and offered as dedications in temples, but too valuable to serve as current specie. Homer and Herodot. passim. Νομισμα, money, is derived from νομος, law, because, as Aristotle says, ου φυσει, αλλα νομω, εστι, "the origin of money is not "natural, but conventional and arbitrary." But in Homer's time, the word νομος was used in a quite different sense: νομισμα must therefore have been derived from it at a later period. Com. Iliad. l. xx. v. 249. and Aristot. Ethic. Nicom. l. v. c. 5.

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as an object of general concern. Cecrops first engaged the wandering hunters or shepherds of Attica to unite in villages of husbandmen. Corn, wine, and oil, rewarded their useful labours[24]; and these productions, being acquired by common toil, were regarded, with the ground itself, as a common property.[25]

Religious rites.

The idea of an exclusive and permanent right to all the uses of a piece of land, whether belonging to communities or to individuals, is one of the most interesting steps in the progress of society. In Greece, this invaluable right was immediately followed by such institutions as tended to secure its enjoyment, and to check the injustice of man, who is seldom willing to acquire, by slow labour, what he can ravish by sudden violence. The salutary influence of religion was employed on this important occasion. We are told by several writers, that the practice of agriculture, and the rites of religion, were introduced at the same time.[26] But these authors also inform us, that their pretended founders of religious worship abolished the use of living sacrifices[27]; a custom, which evidently supposes the prior establishment of an ancient and more

[24] Pausan. l. iii. Æschyl. Eumen.

[25] The τεμενος, or *cut* of ground, so often mentioned in Homer, as bestowed by general consent on admired kings and chiefs, might have suggested this observation, which seems to have escaped notice, though attended, as we shall find, with very important consequences.

[26] Diodor. Pausan. Apollod.

[27] Θεους καστοις αγαλλειν, ζωα μη σωεσθαι. Porph. de Abstinent. iv. 22.

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bloody superstition. Yet, in this humane prohibition, we may perhaps discern a laudable attempt to correct the barbarity of the Greeks, and to raise the new occupation of agriculture above the ancient employment of hunting.

The Hellenes diffuse their colonies and language over Greece;

Before and during the time that the Hellenic tribes received continual accessions of population from distant countries, they were no less diligent in sending forth their own colonies. As they originally subsisted by hunting, fishing, and pasturage, a large extent of territory was requisite to supply them with the necessaries of life. They were not afflicted by the oppressive terrors of despotism; they were long unacquainted with the gentle, but powerful operation of regular government; and without subjection to the one or the other, it is scarcely possible for men to live together in large societies. When any of their communities seemed inconveniently numerous, they divided it into several portions, of which the principal kept possession of their original seats, while the others occupied and peopled the surrounding territories. It was thus that the Eolians dispersed themselves through many parts of the Peloponnesus; the unfortunate Sisyphus[28], who founded the city of Corinth, being a descendant of Eolus; and the ancestors of the wise Nestor, who reigned in sandy Pylos, being sprung from the same Eolic race.[29] A considerable division of the Ionians settled along

[28] Και Σισυφον αυτιδεον κρατερον αλγεα εχοντα. Homer. Odyss.

[29] Pausan. in Corinthet. Messen.

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CHAP. I. the southern shores of the Corinthian gulph, in the province which, eighty years after the Trojan war, changed the name of Ionia for that of Achaia.[30] The territory beyond the Corinthian isthmus was parcelled out among innumerable subdivisions of the Hellenic tribes.[31] When the continent of Greece seemed sufficiently populous, the Athenians gave inhabitants to the isle of Eubœa; and, many centuries before the famous establishments formed by the Greeks on the coasts of Asia Minor, of Italy, and of Thrace, the Dorians had sent a colony to Crete[32], and the Eolians, under the conduct of Dardanus, had planted the eastern banks of the Hellespont.[33] During the Trojan war, the inhabitants of those various and widely separated countries used the same language spoken by the Hellenes, and acknowledged the general influence of the same principles and manners. Unless it is supposed, therefore, that not only the Phrygians, but the Phenicians and Egyptians, originally spoke the same Hellenic tongue, it seems reasonable to conjecture, that the colonies conducted by Cecrops, Cadmus, and Danaus, gradually adopted the language of the aborigines of Greece.[34]

[30] Strabo, l. vii. [31] Id. ibid. Pausan. & Diodor.

[32] Diodor. ibid. Strabo, l. vii. p. 496.

[33] Servius in Æneid. III.

[34] Herodotus, l. v. c. 58. says, that the colony of Cadmus changed their speech, being surrounded by the Ionians, an Hellenic tribe. He says further, that, together with their language, they changed the power of some of their letters. He acknowledges that the Cadmeians, or Phenicians, communicated to the Ionians the use of letters; but the Ionians, he says, adapted the Phenician alphabet

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together with their institutions of government.

A single reflection appears sufficient to prove, that they likewise conformed to the Grecian institutions of government. The inflexible rigour of despotism, which has in all ages prevailed in Egypt [35] and the East, was unknown to the conquerors of Troy. Since the absolute power of kings was not acknowledged during a period of war and danger, requiring the strictest military subordination; and, since the Greeks preserved their freedom, after the increasing wealth of many centuries had a tendency to prepare them for servitude; it cannot reasonably be supposed, that an Oriental system of oppression should have prevailed in the more early ages of poverty and independence. [36]

to the sounds of their own language. The eastern tongues are in general extremely deficient in vowels. It is, or rather was, much disputed, whether the ancient Orientals used any characters to express them. Their languages, therefore, must have had an inflexible thickness of sound, extremely different from the vocal harmony of the Greek, which abounds not only in vowels but in diphthongs. This circumstance denotes, in the Greeks, organs of perception more acute, elegant, and discerning. They felt such faint variations of liquid sounds, as escaped the dulness of Asiatic ears, and invented marks to express them. They distinguished, in this manner, not only their articulation, but their quantity, and afterwards their musical intonation, as shall be explained hereafter, in treating of the Grecian music and poetry.

[35] The government of the Egyptians, as well as of the Asiatics, is uniformly represented in Scripture as an absolute monarchy. Herodotus and Diodorus mention some laws of the Egyptians, which seem to circumscribe the power of their kings. But these laws, if well examined, will confirm the observation in the text. They were established, not in favour of the nation at large, but of the priests and soldiers. The throne of Egypt was supported by the altar, and defended by the sword; and what despotism can be upheld but by the same means?

[36] See the principles established by Tacitus de Mor. German.

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Happy situation of Greece for commerce.

The Phenicians being considered as the principal navigators and merchants of the ancient world, it is commonly believed that the example of the Phenician colonists first taught the Greeks to brave the dangers of the sea, and to maintain a commercial intercourse with each other, as well as with foreign nations. But it is sufficient to throw a glance on the geography of Greece, to perceive how naturally commerce, without foreign aid, might have arisen spontaneously in that highly-favoured country. The continent, *itself* washed on three sides by the sea, is surrounded by innumerable islands, abounding in excellent harbours. The variety of soils and productions is greater, perhaps, than in any other part of the world, of an equal extent. All the shores of the Mediterranean, comprehending the most beautiful, and, anciently, the most flourishing part of the earth, are more accessible to Greece than to any neighbouring country. Yet it appears from the light of history, that the Greeks did not early avail themselves of their fortunate situation, or of the supposed lessons of their Phenician instructors.

Circumstances which retarded the progress of society in Greece.

Face of the country.

Many circumstances conspired to prolong the infancy of their nation, and to retard, during several centuries, their improvement in commerce, as well as in agriculture, and the other useful arts. The surface of Greece is more indented by creeks and rivers, and more roughened by mountains and promontories, than that of any other part of Europe. These natural divisions kept the different communities in a state of separation and hosti-

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lity. The ideas of their ancient consanguinity and common origin were weakened or effaced by the perpetual conflux of foreigners. They could not travel beyond their own narrow districts without being exposed to the insults of enemies. These insults excited resentment; mutual injuries were offered and retorted; each city was at war with its neighbours: and the *smallness* of the Grecian states, a circumstance which, during the happy ages that form the subject of the present history, tended to break the force of custom and opinion, and to encourage that noble emulation, so favourable to the progress of virtue and science, thus produced, in less fortunate times, an effect of the most opposite nature, choaked the seeds of order, and repressed the feeble shoots of arts and humanity.

Smallness of the different states.

The metals, originally destined to promote the peaceful labours of man, were converted into powerful instruments of destruction; and while the land was ravaged by the sword, the sea was covered with pirates. The Phenicians, the Carians, and the inhabitants of the Greek islands in general, considered navigation, not as the means of uniting nations by mutual intercourse and commerce, but as a happy expedient for enabling the poor and the brave to plunder the rich territories of their less warlike neighbours. The coasts of Greece, though in early times their bleak forbidding aspect might have repelled the avarice of free-booters, yet, from the proximity of their situation, and the valuable cargoes of hardy slaves in which they abounded, were con-

The coasts ravaged by pirates.

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tinually infested by naval descents. The unfortified places near the shore surrendered without resistence; the fruits of their painful industry were plundered or destroyed, and the most valuable portion of their inhabitants dragged into captivity. The practice of piracy and invasion was not a temporary resource of war, prompted by necessity, or a just revenge: it grew into an ordinary profession, which was so far from being deemed dishonourable, that it conferred much glory and renown on those who exercised it with skill and bravery.[37]

The inland country invaded by savages.

During this disordered state of society, the arts of peace were almost entirely neglected, and Greece was ready to be plunged into the grossest barbarism, by its domestic dissensions. The irruptions of the Thracians, Amazons, and other northern savages, threatened to accelerate this melancholy event, and to complete the ruin of the unhappy Hellenes.[38] But it may be observed in the affairs of human life, that any extraordinary measure of good or evil commonly leads men to dread, or to expect, a sudden revolution of fortune; a natural sentiment, which, though liable to be abused by credulity and superstition, is founded on the firm basis of experience. The rudiments of the most useful designs are suggested

[37] Thucydid. l. i. ὁις κοσμος καλως τουτο δρᾶν. The explanation in the text seems more consonant to Grecian manners in those ages, than that of the scholiast, translated thus by Mr. Rochford: "Chez qui là piraterie étoit exercée avec une certaine probité." M. de l'Acad. v. 39.

[38] Lysias Orat. Funeb.

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always by necessity, often by calamity. The inroads of the wild mountaineers of Thrace, and of other Barbarians more remote, whose destructive cruelty may be understood by the unexampled fury with which even the feebler sex[39] carried on the ravages of war, occasioned the first institution which restored some degree of present tranquillity to Greece, and laid the foundation of its future grandeur.

Circumstances which tended to civilize Greece.

The northern districts of Thessaly being peculiarly exposed to invasion, the petty princes of that province entered into a confederacy for their mutual defence.[40] They assembled in spring and autumn at Thermopylæ, a place afterwards so illustrious, and then governed by *Amphictyon*, a descendant of Deucalion whose name is immortalized in the *Amphictyonic* council. The advantages which the confederates derived from this measure were soon perceived by their neighbours. The central states gradually acceded to their alliance; and, about the middle of the fourteenth century before Christ, Acrisius, King of Argos, and other princes of the Peloponnesus, were allowed to share the benefits and security of this useful association.

Origin of the Amphictyonic council.

Argonautic expedition A.C. 1263.

After this event, the Amphictyons appear to have long confined themselves to the original pur-

[39] The Amazons. See Lysias Orat. Funeb. and Herodotus, iv. 110. Yet the existence of these warlike females was doubted as early as the days of the Emperor Hadrian, as we learn from Arrian: but what is said by that judicious and manly historian, seems sufficient to dispel the doubt. See Arrian Expedit. Alexan. l. vii. p. 156.

[40] Marm. Oxon. E. 5.

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pose of their institution. The states, whose measures were directed by this assembly, found sufficient occupation in defending their own territories; and near a century elapsed, before they undertook, by common consent, any distant expedition. But it was not to be expected that their restless activity could be always exhausted in defensive war. The establishment of the Amphictyons brought together the chiefs most distinguished by birth and bravery. Glory and emulation prompted them to arms, and revenge directed those arms against the Barbarians. Jason, Admetus, and other chieftains of Thessaly[41], having equipped a small fleet in the neighbouring harbour of Iolcos, and particularly the ship Argo, of superior size and construction to any before known, were animated with a desire to visit foreign lands, to plant colonies in those parts of them that appeared most delightful, and to retort on their inhabitants the injuries which Greece had suffered from strangers.[42] The princes of the north having proclaimed this spirited design over the central and southern provinces, the standard of enterprise and glory was speedily surrounded by the flower of the Grecian youth[43], who eagerly embraced this honourable opportunity to signalize their manly valour. Peleus, Tydeus, Telamon, and, in general, the fathers of those heroic chiefs, who, in the succeeding age, shone with distinguished lustre in the plains of

[41] Their names are mentioned by Apollodorus, Diod. Siculus, Pindar, Apollonius, &c.

[42] Herodot. l. i. Diodor. Sicul. l. iv. [43] Pindar, Pythic. iv.

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Troy, are numbered among the leaders of the Argonauts. They were accompanied by the chosen warriors, and by the venerable prophets of their respective tribes; by an Esculapius, the admired father of the healing art, and by the divine Orpheus[44], whose sublime genius was worthy to celebrate the amazing series of their adventures.

These adventures, however, have been too much adorned by the graces of Poetry, to be the proper subjects for historical composition. The designs of the Argonauts are veiled under the allegorical, or at least doubtful phrase, "of carrying off the golden fleece;" which, though easily explained, if we admit the report that the inhabitants of the eastern banks of the Euxine extended fleeces of wool, in order to collect the golden particles which were carried down by the torrents from Mount Caucasus[45], is yet described by such various language by ancient writers, that almost every modern who examines the subject, thinks himself entitled to offer, by way of explanation, some new conjecture of his own. But, in opposition to the most approved of these conjectures, we may venture to affirm, that the voyage to Colchis was not undertaken with a view to

[44] The testimony of Plato de Repub. l. x. of Isocrates in Busirid. sufficiently attest the poetical fame of Orpheus. The Argonautica, and other works ascribed to him, are collected by Eschenbachius, and published at Nuremberg 1702. That these, however, are the productions of a later age, appears from innumerable circumstances, some of which are mentioned by Fabricius, Bib. Græc. vol. i. p. 120.

[45] Strabo, l. xi. p. 499.

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establish extensive plans of commerce[46], or to search for mines of gold, far less to learn the imaginary art of converting other substances into that precious metal[47]; all such motives supposing a degree of speculation and refinement unknown in that age to the gallant but untutored youth of Thessaly. The real object of the expedition may be discovered in its effects. The Argonauts fought, conquered, and plundered[48]; they settled a colony on the shores of the Euxine[49]; and carried into Greece a daughter of the King of Colchis, the celebrated Medea[50], a princess of Egyptian extraction, whose crimes and enchantments are condemned to eternal infamy in the immortal lines of Euripides.

Important consequences of the Argonautic expedition.

Notwithstanding many romantic fictions that disfigure the story of the Argonauts, their undertaking appears to have been attended with a considerable and a happy effect on the manners and character of the Greeks. From the æra of this celebrated expedition, we may discover not only a more daring and more enlarged spirit of enterprise, but a more decisive and rapid progress towards civilization and humanity. The sullen and unsociable chiefs, whose acquaintance with each other most commonly arose from acts of mutual hostility, hitherto gave full scope[51] to the

[46] Eustath. in Homer.
[47] Suidas, Memoires de l'Academ. v. 9. Exped. Argon.
[48] Diodor. ibid. [49] Xenoph. Anabas. [50] Euripid. Med.
[51] This was the brazen age described by Hesiod. Oper. & Di. l. i. v. 142—155. and by Plutarch in the life of Theseus.

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sanguinary passions which characterise Barbarians. Strength and courage were almost the only qualities which they admired: they fought and plundered at the head of their respective tribes, while the inhabitants of the neighbouring districts were regarded as fit objects only to excite their rage and gratify their rapacity. But these gloomy warriors, having exerted their joint valour in a remote expedition, learned the necessity of acquiring more amiable virtues, as well as of adopting more liberal notions of the public interest. Military courage and address might alone procure them the respect of their immediate followers, since the safety of the little community often depended on the warlike abilities of the chieftain; but, when several tribes had combined in a common enterprise, there was less dependence on the prowess of any single leader. Emulation and interest naturally rendered all these leaders as jealous of each other, as desirous of the public esteem; and, in order to acquire this esteem, it was necessary to enhance the renown of martial spirit by the more valuable[52] virtues of justice and humanity.

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Change of manners.

When this glorious field first opened to the ambition of the Greeks, they cultivated it with a degree of energy equally ardent and successful. Innumerable were the exploits of Hercules, of

The heroic age.

[52] Hesiod marks this change of manners. It happened between the expedition of the Argonauts and the siege of Thebes, since the latter was the first exploit in which his new race of men, γενος δικαιοτερον και αρειον, "a more just and nobler race," were engaged. See Hesiod. Oper. & Di. l. i. v. 155—165.

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53 "In order to obtain the immortal fruits of merit," says Aristotle, in his beautiful Ode to Virtue,

ὁ διος Ηρακλης,
Λησας τε κουροι, πολλα ανετλασαν,
Εργοις σαν αγρευοντες δυναμιν·
Τοις δε ποθοις Αχιλλευς,
Αιας τ' Αιδαο δομον ηλθον.

This ode, which is preserved in Diogen. Laert. in Aristot. and in Athenæus, l. xv. c. 16. proves the mind of the Stagyrite to have been as lofty as capacious; and, while it comprehended the whole circle of science, capable of reaching, in lyric poetry, the highest flights of Pindar and Horace. The latter, probably, had Aristotle in view, in ode 3. b. 3.

Hac arte Pollux, & vagus Hercules
Innixus, arces attigit igneas.

But in the order of his names he is not so faithful to chronology.

54 In the shield of Hercules, Hesiod describes a boar fighting with a lion, and almost prevailing in the combat. That animal was no less terrible on the opposite coast of Asia than in Greece, as we learn from Herodotus, l. i. c. 34. et seq.

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doubtless, been embellished by the elegant fancy of poets and orators; but they will remain eternal monuments of generous magnanimity, which sacrifices the instinctive love of ease and pleasure to the acquired taste for glory and renown.[55]

The w of Thebes. A.C. 1225.

The laws of war and peace gradually improved with the progress of humanity; and the first general enterprise, which succeeded the expedition of the Argonauts, proves that whole communities, as well as individuals, had begun to respect the virtues most essential to public happiness. The war of Thebes has deserved, therefore, to be recorded; while the more ancient hostilities between the Hellenic tribes, of which justice was not even the pretence, but lust or avarice the only cause, and wealth or beauty the only prize, are universally condemned to oblivion. Contempt of an ancient oracle, the involuntary crimes of Oedipus, and the unnatural cruelty of his sons, involved the royal family of Thebes in that maze of calamities, appropriated in all ages, from Sophocles[56] to Voltaire, as favourite subjects of the tragic muse. Eteocles and Polynices (these were the miserable sons of Oedipus) having hastened the death, and drawn down the maledictions, of their unhappy father, agreed to sway, by turns, the Theban sceptre. Eteocles,

[55] Isocrat. Hellen. Encom. & Panegyr. Lysias & Demosthen. Orat. Funebr. Pausan. Attic.

[56] I might have said Æschylus, whose "Seven against Thebes" is founded on the history related in the text. But the name of Sophocles will bring to the mind of every reader of taste and humanity, the Oedipus Tyrannus, and particularly the Oedipus Coloneus.

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CHAP. I. the elder brother, reigned during the first year; but his ambitious temper, corrupted by the honours of royalty, refused to resign the throne at the appointed term of his command. His rival, Polynices, married the daughter of Adrastus, King of Argos, who enabled his son-in-law to assert, by force of arms, his just pretensions to the alternate inheritance. The allied princes, reinforced by Tydeus, Capaneus, and three other chiefs, marched to Thebes at the head of seven bands of armed followers, who invested the seven gates of the city. The Thebans, impatient of confinement within the walls of a place ill provided with supplies, yielded to the martial ardour of Eteocles, and repelled the assailants by a vigorous sally, in which the most illustrious combatants fell on both sides, and the wretched brothers perished by mutual wounds. The cause of the war being removed by this horrid catastrophe, the Argives craved leave to bury their dead; but the Thebans, exasperated against the daring invaders of their country, returned them an answer, which, according to the principles of that age, bade defiance to the dictates of nature, and the precepts of religion. In this extremity, Adrastus, the only chief who survived the battle, had recourse to the humane piety of the Athenians, who, uninfluenced by motives of ambition or interest, took arms in defence of public justice, and compelled the cruel obstinacy of the Thebans to grant the last melancholy honours to the ashes of their deceased enemies.[57]

[57] Lysias Orat. Funeb.

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At the distance of ten years, the more fortunate sons of the chiefs who had fallen before the Theban walls, resented, with the fury of religious rage, the indignities that had been impiously offered to the manes of their fathers. They again laid siege to the guilty city, destroyed the lives and property of many of the inhabitants, dragged many into captivity, and compelled the remainder to acknowledge, as their king, the infant son of the injured Polynices.[58]

Circumstances which favoured the progress towards internal tranquillity in the Grecian states.

In their progress towards civilization, the Greeks perceived the advantages of political confederacy, before they became sensible to the benefits of civil union. The necessity of providing for defence against the assaults of foreign enemies, and the natural dictates of interest and ambition, unfolded the idea of a federal association between different communities, before the members of any one state had been sufficiently united in the system of domestic policy. Various clusters of towns and villages, situated in winding vallies, divided by lofty mountains, acknowledged the authority of kings or chieftains, who led forth their warlike youth to glory and danger. Summoned to arms against foreign enemies, they readily flocked to the standard of their king, and received with implicit submission, his commands in the field: but, when no common cause roused their emulation, or excited their valour, the in-

[58] Confer. Homer. l. iv. v. 337. & passim. Hesiod. Op. & Di. Æschyl. Septem contra Thebas. Lysias Orat. Funeb. Statius Thebaid. Apollod. l. iii. Diodor. l. iv. Pausan. in Bœotic.

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habitants of each little township aspired at independent jurisdiction, and the nominal subjects of the same prince often terminated their differences by the decision of the sword. [59]

The example of Crete.

To cement such disorderly communities by laws and government, required an acquaintance with some more civilized people, among whom the effects of this happy union visibly prevailed. Such an example fortunately occurred in the wise institutions and policy of the Cretans, which are represented not only as the most ancient, but the best regulations, that ever were established in any portion of the Grecian territory. [60] The celebrated island, which fable has dignified with the imaginary honour of giving birth to some of the gods [61] of Greece, is entitled to the real praise of communicating to that country many useful improvements. It had been early planted, as we had occasion already to observe, by a colony of Dorians. This colony, which received various [62] accessions from Greece, enjoyed two advantages above their brethren on the continent. Their insular situation left them exposed, indeed, to naval depredations, but delivered them from those fierce incursions by land, which often disfigured and desolated the mother country. A favourable gale wafted the unskilful mariners of antiquity from the shores of Crete to the capital of Egypt. The facility of communica-

Peculiar circumstances of that island.

[59] Thucydid. l. i. Plut. in Theseo.

[60] Plat. de Leg. & in Minoc. Aristot. Pol. l. ii. Plut. in Lycurg.

[61] Hesiod. Theog. [62] Homer. Iliad. l. xix. v. 172, &c.

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tion thus introduced between the two countries an habitual intercourse, from which the barbarous islanders had nothing to lose, and every thing to gain. Rhadamanthus[63], and others of their early kings or chieftains, whom interest or curiosity carried into Egypt and the East, appear to have had sagacity to observe, and dexterity to employ, several of the inventions and institutions of those powerful and civilized kingdoms, for the useful purpose of confirming their own authority, and bridling the fierce passions of their countrymen. CHAP. I.

The elder Minos is peculiarly distinguished for promoting this beneficial design. The doubtful appellation of Son of the Ocean, which, perhaps, he might derive from his numerous voyages, leaves it uncertain whether he was a native Cretan, or a foreigner. In the countries which he had visited, he observed certain families invested, from time immemorial, with unbounded honours, as the immediate vicegerents of the divinity. The uncultivated, but free-born genius of Greece, always rejected this odious profanation; and the prudence of Minos aspired only to obtain that respect for his office, which he would have vainly solicited for his person. We are not informed by what virtues, civil or military, he acquired, before the establishment of his laws, an extraordinary influence among the Cretans. But, as slaves multiplied to such a degree in the island during his reign, that agricul- The elder Minos.

[63] Strabo, l. x. p. 480.

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ture and the mechanic arts were exercised by them alone, there is reason to conjecture that he had been extremely successful in war against his neighbours, and no less equitable in dividing the booty among the various Cretan tribes who followed the fortune of his arms. However this may be, it appears from the general evidence of antiquity, that Minos had address to persuade men, prone to wonder and to believe; among whom, whatever dazzled the imagination announced the presence of a divinity, that their favourite hero was admitted to the familiarity of the gods.[64] From them, he pretended to derive an invaluable system of laws, which he was enjoined to engrave on tables of brass. From Jupiter he received the regal sceptre, which entitled him to administer these laws, but obliged him to respect them. By command of the same god, he founded the cities of Cnossus, Cydonia, and Phestus; and united the distant subjects of his wide-extended domain, by such regulations as served alike to support the authority of the prince, and to maintain the rights of the people.[65]

Expedition of Theseus into Crete.

The beautiful arrangement of this political edifice struck the discerning eye of Theseus, the illustrious son of Ægeus, King of Athens, in his celebrated expedition to Crete, during the reign of the second Minos. The last-mentioned prince

[64] Διος μεγαλου οαριστης. Odyss. l. xix. v. 179. which Horace translates,

Jovis arcanis Minos admissus. L. i. Ode 28.

[65] Strabo, l. x. p. 480. Plato in Minoe. Diod. l. v.

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joined the splendor of military renown to the famed wisdom of his revered ancestor. His maritime force exceeded the united strength of his neighbours; he subdued several of the circumjacent isles; and, while he permitted his own subjects to ravage the coasts of Greece, under pretence of lawful war, he effectually checked the piratical depredations of the Carians, Lycians, and Phenicians, which had hitherto proved so frequent and so destructive.[66] Athens experienced the effects of his power and ambition, and reluctantly submitted to a disgraceful tribute of seven youths, and as many virgins[67], which was cruelly exacted by a nation subsisting from the labour of slaves. The tributary captives were drawn by lot from the body of the people, who trembled at the annual return of the Cretan vessel. Discontents arose against the government of Ægeus, who seemed to bear the indignity with too much tameness; when his heroic son, with a patriotism congenial to his character, generously offered his life in the service of his country.[68] The fame of Theseus had already reached the ears of Minos, who respected his virtues; and this respect was converted into admiration, on beholding the Athenian prince a voluntary captive. Minos

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[66] Thucydid. l. i.

[67] Odyss. l. xi. v. 320. & Virgil, Æn. 6.

Tum pendere pœnas
Cecropidæ jussi, miserum! septena quotannis
Corpora natorum.

[68] Ipse suum Theseus pro caris corpus Athenis
Projicere optavit.——— Catullus.

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treated him with the affectionate kindness of ancient hospitality; gave him his daughter Ariadne in marriage; and declared the Athenians thenceforth free from a contribution equally cruel and ignominious. Theseus reaped great glory from this transaction. The vessel, in which he sailed, continued to be annually sent, for more than eight centuries afterwards, to return thanks to Apollo, in his favourite island of Delos[69]; and the fortunate voyage to Crete was celebrated by sacrifices, and other ceremonies, handed down to the latest times of the Athenian republic.[70]

Theseus communicates the Cretan improvements to Attica.

Many extraordinary circumstances, invented by the poets, disfigure events, which are otherwise sufficiently authenticated. The unnatural amours of the abominable Pasiphaë, and the bloody feasts of the monstrous Minotaur[71], have been faithfully transcribed, from one age to another, in the tiresome compilations of injudicious mythologists; but it seems not to have occurred to those writers, that the expedition to Crete laid the foundation of the improvements afterwards introduced by Theseus into the Athenian government. The institutions and manners of that island presented a picture of more regular composition, and more harmonious colouring, than could be seen in any part of the Grecian continent. Various societies of freemen,

[69] Plato. Phædo.

[70] Plut. in Theseo.

[71] Hic crudelis amor tauri, suppostaque furto
Pasiphaë, &c.

The judicious Virgil places these strange stories in the sculptured porch of an ancient temple.

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all united under one government, all equal among themselves, and all served by slaves; no private property in land; the men eating at public tables, and the families subsisting from the common stock; the youth regularly trained to the gymnastic exercises, navigation, and war; a severe morality enforced by law, honour the reward of age and merit; and the whole community acknowledging the prerogative of an hereditary king, who derived his authority from Jupiter, but who was no longer entitled to the divine protection, than he continued to observe justice, and to maintain the unalienable privileges of his subjects.[72] Impressed with the salutary institutions which he beheld in this flourishing island, Theseus, upon his accession to the throne of his father, was ambitious to communicate them to his native country. The rudeness of the Athenians, indeed, admitted not the introduction of written laws. But the scattered villages of Attica were persuaded to embrace the regulations of the capital[73]; to unite in common ceremonies of religion; to acknowledge the reciprocal obligations of subjects; and, while they asserted the rights of citizens, to respect, during peace and war, the sacred prerogative of royal majesty.

Thence diffused through Greece.

The improvements in domestic policy, thus introduced into Attica by the example of Crete, and the wisdom of Theseus, were gradually adopted by the neighbouring provinces.[74] At the commencement of the Trojan war, all the Grecian

[72] Aristot. Polit. l. ii. c. 9, &c. Strabo, ibid. Plato de Leg.
[73] Thucydid. l. ii. Plut. in Theseo. [74] Dionys. Halic. l. v.

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states had embraced one uniform system of government, uniting the independent spirit of European freedom with the respectful veneration of Egyptian and Asiatic superstition.[75] This singular frame of policy, composed of materials seemingly incapable of alliance, was peculiarly well adapted to great and generous undertakings; and unless the divine, though limited authority of kings, had fortified the other institutions which served to tame the ferocity of the Greeks, there is reason to doubt whether their leaders could have roused above an hundred thousand stubborn Barbarians to a distant and difficult enterprise, much less have detained their reluctant impatience during ten years in the siege of Troy.

This enables the Greeks to undertake the Trojan war.

Before we examine the causes and incidents of this celebrated siege, to which the exploits hitherto related seem but unworthy preludes, it may be proper to take a short view of the strength and resources of the two nations, who were eager to shock in a conflict, that totally destroyed the one, and proved extremely ruinous to the other. Exclusive of the provinces of Epirus and Macedonia, which long remained barbarous and uncultivated, the continental possessions of the Greeks were nearly equal to Scotland in extent, marked with still bolder features, and blessed with a warmer sun. In its length, the whole country is almost equally divided by two opposite gulphs, compressing between them a mountainous neck of land, to the breadth of only five miles, into the

Description of Greece;

its strength and resources.

[75] Homer, passim.

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peninsula of Peloponnesus, and the territory extending northwards, from the extremity of the Corinthian isthmus to the southern frontier of Macedonia.[76] The Peloponnesus, an hundred and sixty miles in length, and scarcely one hundred in breadth, is every where intersected by mountains, particularly the towering ridges of Zarex and Taygetus. During the flourishing ages of Greece, this small peninsula contained seven independent communities of unequal power and fame, which ranked in the following order: The comparatively large, and highly diversified, territory of Laconia; the fruitful vale of Argos; the extensive coast of Achaia; the narrow but commercial isthmus of Corinth; the central and mountainous region of Arcadia; together with the more level countries of Elis and Messenia, which are throughout better adapted to tillage than any other provinces of the Peloponnesus.[77] The Grecian possessions beyond the Corinthian isthmus were more considerable, extending above two hundred miles from east to west, and one hundred and fifty from north to south. They were naturally divided by the long and intricate ridges of Olympus, Pindus, Oeta, and Ossa, into nine separate provinces; which, during the celebrated ages of Grecian freedom, were occupied by nine independent republics. They comprehended the extensive and fertile plains of Thessaly and Bœotia, both of which were, in early times, much exposed to

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[76] Strabo, l. vii. [77] Strabo, ibid. & Pausan. Messen.

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CHAP. I. inundations; and the latter, abounding in subterranean caverns, was peculiarly subject to earthquakes; the less fertile, but more secure territory of Attica; the western provinces of Ætolia and Acarnania, encompassed on one side by dangerous seas, and confined on the other by almost impassable mountains; and the four smaller rocky districts of Phocis, Doris, Locris, and Megara.[78]

It has been observed, that these names and divisions, which remained to the latest times, are pretty accurately marked by Homer, whose poems continued through succeeding ages, to be the approved standard and legal code, to which neighbouring communities appealed, in adjusting their disputed boundaries.[79] This observation, however, must be qualified chiefly by two exceptions. During the Trojan war, the extensive province of Thessaly sent forth above a fourth part of the whole Grecian strength, and was divided among many warlike leaders. It might naturally be expected, while agriculture and pasturage were the principal occupations subservient to human life, that a country, abounding in plains and meadows, should excel in population and in power.[80] When commerce, navigation, and the mechanic arts, enriched and adorned the middle and southern divisions of Greece, the northern district of Thessaly lost its ancient pre-eminence. The second exception arose from the extensive power of the house of Pelops,

[78] Strabo, l. vii. [79] Plut. in Solon. [80] Plato in Menon.

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which, as already mentioned, had, by fortunate marriages and rich successions, acquired dominion over the northern and eastern parts of the Peloponnesus, formerly containing several independent principalities, and, after the misfortunes of Agamemnon and his family, again divided into the immortal republics of Sparta, Argos, Corinth, and Achaia. CHAP. I.

From this general view of the country, it will not appear remarkable, that, in an age when every able-bodied man was a soldier, Greece should have raised an army of an hundred and two thousand men. The Acarnanians alone, for reasons unknown, sent no forces to Troy. But the continent was assisted by the generous efforts of Crete, of Rhodes, and of many smaller islands, which were subject to their respective princes, or governed by the wide extended dominion of Agamemnon. The vessels collected for transporting these forces to Asia amounted to twelve hundred sail. They were equipped at little expence, and built with little ingenuity, moved by only one bank of oars, and entirely unprovided with decks or anchors. Their complement varied in different vessels; some contained an hundred and twenty, others only fifty men, who appear to have been equally acquainted with the military art, as practised in that remote age, and with the rude simplicity of ancient navigation.[81] Number of the Grecian ships and troops.

[81] Thucydid. ibid. Homer, passim.

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Description of Troas, or Lesser Phrygia.

The celebrated kingdom of Priam, against which this armament was directed, occupied the eastern banks of the Hellespont, the southern coast of the Propontis, and the northern shores of the Ægæan. From the river Esepus to the promontory of Lectum, the Trojan dominions extended in length two hundred miles; but their breadth was far less considerable, being irregularly compressed between three seas, and the lofty ridges of mount Ida. This delightful and picturesque country, which surpassed Greece in fruitfulness of soil and softness of climate [82], was distinguished by the epithet of Hellespontian, from the large inland province which bore the common name of Phrygia. [83] The Lesser, or Hellespontian Phrygia, was planted, according to tradition, by a Grecian colony, about two hundred years before the Trojan war. The similarity of religion, language, and manners, sufficiently justified that opinion, and seems to have induced the most diligent enquirers of antiquity to regard not only the Trojans, but the Lycians and Pamphylians, as scattered branches of the Hellenic nation [84], which distance of place had gradually cut off from all communication with the trunk. The Asiatic Greeks were exposed to none of those unfavourable circumstances already mentioned, which long retarded the improvement of their brethren in Europe. The fertile and extensive plains of Asia offered them the materials of more powerful kingdoms than

History of that country.

[82] Hippocrat. de Loc.
[83] Strabo, l. xiii.
[84] Herodot. l. vii. Strabo, l. xiv.

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Greece could afford; and, instead of being harassed and endangered by the continual incursions of northern savages, they enjoyed the vicinity of the Phrygians and Lydians, nations described as flourishing in wealth and peace from the remotest antiquity.[85] From the prevalence of the Grecian language and customs on the one hand, and the name of the country on the other, it is not unreasonable to suppose, that the Trojans were a mingled race of Greeks, and Phrygians, collected by Dardanus, ancestor fifth in ascent from old Priam. CHAP I.

This adventurer, whose parentage Homer leaves uncertain, by calling him son of Jupiter[86], founded a city on one of the many western branches of mount Ida, commanding a beautiful and fertile plain, and watered by the immortal rivers Simois and Scamander.[87] The new settlement flourished under his son, the wealthy Erichthonius, who, by the judicious management of his mares and stallions, supplied the neighbouring kingdoms with horses of a superior breed. His successor, Tros, communicated his name to the territory, which was often called Troas, and to the celebrated city Ilion, which his son Ilus, having removed his residence from the mountain, built on the adjoining plain. Laomedon, the successor of Ilus, fortified the town of Ilion, or Troy, with walls of such uncommon strength, that, in the language and belief of the times, they

[85] Herodot. l. i. Dionys. Halic. l. i. Suidas in voc. Ανναξος.
[86] Iliad, xx. v. 215. [87] Ibid. xx. v. 216, &c. Strabo, lxiii.

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were deemed the work of the gods.[88] Whether he defrauded his supposed auxiliaries of their promised rewards and sacrifices, or supplied the expence of this undertaking by despoiling their sacred shrines, it is certain that the guilt of Laomedon was believed to entail calamity on his unhappy descendants.

Reign of Priam.

His son Priam, however, long enjoyed the deceitful gifts of fortune, before he was overtaken by the vengeance of Heaven. Having attained old age in the undisturbed possession of a throne, he was surrounded by a numerous and flourishing family, beloved by his subjects, and respected by his neighbours. Yet this amiable, but too indulgent prince, was destined to feel the sharpest pangs of human misery.

Cause of the Trojan war.

Hereditary feuds subsisted between the ancestors of Priam and those of Agamemnon, when the latter quitted their establishments in Asia, to seek new settlements in Greece. The insult offered to Ganymede, a beautiful Trojan youth, by the brutal fury of Tantalus[89], was retorted on Menelaus, the fourth in descent from this infamous prince, by the rape and detention of his queen, the celebrated Helen. Paris, the ill-fated son of Priam, was the author of this new injury. But resentment for the wrongs of his house formed not the only motive which engaged

[88] Homer, Iliad, xx. v. 216, &c. Strabo, l. xiii.

[89] It has been observed, that the story of Tantalus, father of Pelops, was probably the invention of a later age. It is certain that, whatever might prevail in Phrygia, the unnatural passion, which disgraced the later times of Greece, was unknown in that country during the heroic ages. Natal. Com. l. ix. c. 13.

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the youthful levity of Paris to dishonour the sister-in-law of Agamemnon. Helen was the daughter of Tyndareus, King of Sparta. The illustrious honours of her family were adorned by the generous magnanimity of her brothers, Castor and Polydeuces, whose exploits shone conspicuous in all the military expeditions of that gallant age. But the native lustre of Helen needed not the aid of foreign ornament. Even in the tender age of childhood, her opening charms had inflamed the heart of Theseus[90], the most admired and the most virtuous of the Grecian chiefs. The fame of her beauty increased with her ripening age, and her person became an object of eager contention among those who, from birth or merit, were entitled to aspire at the invaluable prize. Tyndareus, solicitous to prevent the violence of a second lover, (for, agreeably to the manners of his age, Theseus had carried her off by force,) bound the various suitors by oath to defend the honour of his daughter, and to secure the possession of her charms to the man who should be honoured with her choice.[91] The princely mien and insinuating manners of Menelaus were preferred to more solid qualities in several of his numerous competitors. Having married the heiress of Tyndareus, he succeeded, in her right, to the Spartan throne.[92] The graceful pair had not long enjoyed the honours of royalty, and the sweets of conjugal union, when their happiness was interrupted by the arrival of

Beauty and adventures of Helen, daughter of the King of Sparta.

She marries Menelaus, who succeeds to that kingdom.

[90] Plut. in Theseo. [91] Thucydid. l. i. c. 9. [92] Pausan. Lacon.

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Character of Paris, son of Priam;

the son of Priam, the handsomest man of his age, and singularly adorned with the frivolous accomplishments that often captivate the weakness of a female mind. Though a soldier of no great renown, Paris had strongly imbibed the romantic spirit of gallantry which prevailed[88] in the heroic ages, and was distinguished by an ardent passion for beauty, which, notwithstanding the general softness of his unwarlike character, prompted him to brave every danger in pursuit of his favourite object. Animated by the hope of beholding the inimitable model of what he most adored, he seized the opportunity afforded him by a voyage of Menelaus into Crete, visited the dominions of his hereditary enemies, and solicited the rites of hospitality at the Spartan court.

who seduces, and carries her to Troy.

His person, his accomplishments, his address, and, still more, the voluntary hardships which he had endured for her sake, seduced the inconstant affections of the Grecian Queen. Enamoured of the elegant stranger, she abandoned her country and her husband; and having transported her most valuable treasure within the Trojan walls, defied the resentment of Greece, and the vengeance of Heaven.

It was now the time for Menelaus to crave the stipulated assistance of his ancient rivals. His

[88] Perseus had carried off the African Meduſa; Jaſon, Medea of Colchis; Theſeus, the Amazon Antiope; Hercules, Megara, Iole, Deaneira, &c. The hiſtorical poets of the heroic ages might have ſaid, with Ariosto,

Le donne, i cavalier, l'arme, gli amori,
Le cortesie, l'audaci imprese Jo canto.

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demand was enforced by the authority of Agamemnon.[24] At the summons of the two brothers, the confederates assembled at Ægium, the capital of Achaia; confirmed the obligation of their former promise; settled the proportion of troops to be raised by each prince; determined the time and place of their departure; and named Agamemnon, the most powerful among them, to the chief command in an expedition which so deeply concerned the honour of his family.

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The Greeks determine to recover her.

Aulis, a sea-port of Bœotia, was appointed for the place of rendezvous and embarkation.[25] Before the whole armament sailed from thence, *Ulysses*, King of Ithaca, and, what may seem extraordinary, the injured Menelaus, undertook a solemn embassy to Troy, in order to demand restitution and reparation; but returned highly disgusted with their reception and treatment. Some members of the Trojan council had the barbarity to propose their immediate death. Their just indignation increased the warlike ardour of their associates. But contrary winds long retarded their departure. The Trojans had time to strengthen their ramparts, to collect arms and provisions, and to summon the assistance of distant confederates. The martial spirit of the age, together with a sense of common danger, brought many powerful auxiliaries to Priam. His cause was defended by the hardy mountaineers, who covered the back of his kingdom; by the Carians, Lycians, and other nations of

Sail to Troy under the command of Agamemnon.

[24] Thucydid. l. i. c. 9. [25] Hesiod, Oper. & Dies.

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Asia Minor, extending from the mouth of the river Halys to the southern extremity of Cilicia; and by the Pelasgi, Thracians, and Pæonians, fierce barbarians who inhabited the European side of the Hellespont and Propontis. Confiding, however, rather in their domestic strength than in foreign assistance, the Trojans determined to defend their native shores against hostile invasion. The debarkation of the Greeks was purchased by much blood. Having effected a descent, they encamped on the Trojan plain, but lost the only opportunity which they enjoyed, during many years, of crushing at once the power of their enemies; who immediately shut themselves up within their impenetrable walls, leaving the city open only on the side of mount Ida, from which they received corn, cattle, and other necessary supplies.

Effect a descent on the Trojan coast.

Agamemnon, as there was reason to expect from the manners of his age, had been more industrious in collecting a great army, than provident in contriving means by which it might keep the field. The provisions transported from Greece were speedily consumed, while the operations of the siege promised little hopes of success, the Greeks being unacquainted with any military engines fitted to make an impression on the Trojan walls. With such a numerous army, they might have converted the siege into a blockade; but scarcity of supplies compelled the greater part of them to quit the camp. The resource of ravaging the adjacent country soon exhausted itself. Many bethought themselves of cultivating

Causes which protracted the siege of Troy.

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the rich vales of the Chersonesus, whose industrious inhabitants had recently been expelled or destroyed, by the fierce incursions of the barbarous Thracians.[96] Others had recourse to piracy, scoured the neighbouring seas, ravaged the unprotected coasts of the Hellespont and Ægæan, and plundered or demolished such unfortified places as acknowledged the dominion, or assisted the arms of Troy.[97] These ravages excited the rage of the Asiatics, and rendered them more hearty in the cause of their confederates. In this manner nine summers and winters elapsed, without affording the nearer prospect of a decision to the contest; but in the tenth year of the war, the seeming misfortunes of the Greeks precipitated the downfall of the proud city of Priam. A dreadful pestilence invaded the camp of the besiegers, and long continued to rage with unabating fury. This calamity was followed by the well-known quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles, which deprived the Grecian army of its principal strength and ornament. The Trojans derived new spirits from the misfortunes of their enemies; they ventured to abandon the protection of their walls, boldly assailed the Grecian camp, and risked several engagements, in most of which they were victorious. In the last of these, the beloved friend of Achilles was slain by the arm of Hector, the bravest and most generous of the Trojan race. This event, which was infinitely more dreadful

That city taken in the tenth year of the war.

[96] Thucydid. l. i.

[97] Homer, passim.

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than death to the affectionate ardour of the Grecian chief, stifled his hitherto inexorable resentment against the proud tyranny of Agamemnon. His return to the camp restored the declining fortune of the Greeks; and the indignant fury of his rage was quenched in the detested blood of Hector, whose patriotic valour had long been the firmest bulwark of his father's kingdom. The destruction of Troy[88] soon followed the death of her darling hero. The city, whether taken by storm or by surprise, was set on fire in the night; most of the citizens perished by the sword, or were dragged into captivity; and only a miserable remnant escaped through the confused horror of raging flames and expiring kinsmen.

Future fortunes of Troy.

The burning of Troy happened eleven hundred and eighty-four years before the Christian æra. Neither the city nor territory ever assumed, in any succeeding age, the dignity of independent government.[89] The sea-coast was planted eighty years after the Trojan war, by new colonies from Greece; and the inland parts

[88] We should probably know something more of the history of the Trojan war, if the works of Pisander remained. Macrobius, in speaking of the plagiarisms of the Romans from Greek writers, has the following passage: "Quæ Virgilius traxit a Græcis, dicturumne me "putetis, quæ vulgo nota sunt? ... vel quod aversionem Trojæ "cum Sinone suo et equo ligneo, cæterisque omnibus, quæ librum "secundum faciunt, a *Pisandro* pene ad verbum transcripserit, qui "inter Græcos poetas eminet," &c. Macrob. l. v. c. 2.

[89] I have carefully examined the evidence given by Bochart (Epist. num Æneas unquam fuit in Italia), and by Mr. Wood (Essay on the original Genius of Homer), to prove that the descendants of

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submitted to the growing power of the Lydians, whose arms overspread and conquered all the finest provinces of Lesser Asia.[100] CHAP. I.

The Greeks had recovered possession of the admired beauty of Helen; they had taken complete vengeance on the family[101] and nation of her unhappy seducer; but the misfortunes which were the natural consequence of the Trojan expedition, left them little reason to boast of their victory. Of five Bœotian commanders, only one remained, and the siege had been proportionably fatal to the leaders of other tribes, as well as to their warlike followers. Those who lived to divide the rich spoils of Troy, were impatient to set sail with their newly-acquired treasure, notwithstanding the threatening aspect of the skies. Many of them perished by shipwreck; the rest were long tossed on unknown seas; and when they expected to find in their native country the end of their calamities, they were exposed to suffer greater calamities there, than any which they had yet endured. The thrones of several of the absent princes had been usurped by violence and ambition; the lands of various communities had been occupied by the invasion of

The calamitous return of the Greeks.

Æneas reigned in Troy. But notwithstanding the learned ingenuity of a profound, and the plausible criticism of an elegant scholar, the matter seems still too doubtful to warrant contradicting the popular opinion.

[100] Hesiod, l. ii. Thucyd. l. i. Justin, l. xviii. Strabo, l. iii.

[101] I dwell not on a subject which has been treated by the great masters of the passions. See Virgil:

Forsitan et Priami fuerint quæ fata requiras, &c.

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CHAP. I. hostile tribes: even the least unfortunate of those adventurers found their domains uncultivated, or their territories laid waste; their families torn by discord, or their cities shaken by sedition. And thus the most celebrated enterprise of combined Greece tended to plunge that delightful and once happy country into barbarism and misery. [102]

[102] Plato, de Leg. l. iii. Thucyd. l. i. p. 9.

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CHAP. II.

Religion. — Government. — Arts. — Manners, and Character.

CHAP. II. Introduction.

THE ancient Greeks had strongly imbibed an opinion, that the country in which they lived was peculiarly favourable to the dignity of human nature. The voluptuous climates of Asia produced invention and ingenuity, but softened the tempers of men into a fitness for servitude. The rigorous severity of European skies gave strength and agility to the limbs, and hardy boldness to the mind, but chilled the fancy, and benumbed the finer feelings of the soul. The inhabitants of the east and south were degraded below the condition of humanity, by an unfortunate abuse of power, while the turbulent sons of the north and west were incapable, from ignorance and indocility, of submitting to any regular system of government. The Greeks alone, possessing an intermediate situation between the extremes of cold and heat, united courage and capacity; tempered the stern and manly, with the gentler virtues; and enjoyed the double advantage of liberty and laws.[1]

The authority of Homer, as an historian.

This splendid observation is too flattering to the dictates of national vanity to be hastily adopted by a cautious enquirer into truth, who will be

[1] Aristot. Politic. l. vii. c. 7. Isocrat. Govern. Athen. Panegyric. & Panathen.

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apt to ascribe the superior lustre of Grecian manners, rather to the elegant imagination of authors, than to the intrinsic merit of their subject. Yet, it must be acknowledged, several circumstances would lead us to believe, that the great poet to whom we owe our principal information concerning the ancient state of Greece, copied from nature only. The majesty of Virgil, the splendour of Tasso, and the sublimity of Milton, are not sufficient to conceal an effort in those noble writers to maintain the tone which they have assumed; a desire to embellish the manners which they describe; an ambition to elevate and to adorn their poems by the use of a marvellous machinery, which had not its foundation in the experience, and (as to Virgil and Tasso) scarcely in the belief of their own age. In Homer, there is neither embellishment, nor effort, nor disguise of any kind: he relates what he has seen and heard with unaffected simplicity; his ideas and sentiments are not only clothed in all the pleasing graces of poetry, but arrayed in the charms of persuasive truth; and an amazing diversity of characters, preserving amidst innumerable shades of discrimination, a general air of resemblance, distinguish the Iliad and Odyssey above other poetical compositions, and prove them to have been copied, not from the limited combinations of human invention, but from the wide variety of impressions in the rich storehouse of nature. In some descriptive parts of his poem, Homer doubtless yielded to the luxuriance of his inimitable fancy; but it seems plain from

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internal evidence only, that he delineates with minute accuracy, the geography, mythology, history, and manners of Greece; and that his observations concerning all these subjects are perfectly agreeable to the opinions and belief which universally prevailed among his countrymen. If this matter required the aid of foreign evidence, it might be fully confirmed by the testimony of the Greek historians, who support in every instance the veracity of the poet; asserting not only the authenticity of the facts which he relates, but the influence of the causes to which he ascribes them.[2]

Comparison between the Greeks of the heroic ages, and the Germans as described by Tacitus.

It may be observed, however, by those who would repress the ebullitions of Grecian vanity, that, admitting the poems of Homer as complete evidence concerning the ancient state of his country, all the advantage that would follow from this supposition is, that the Greeks have been accurately described at an earlier period of their society than most other nations; but the silence

[2] The nature and transactions of the gods, which justly shock the feelings of the modern reader, are perfectly conformable to the belief of the Greeks. The continual interposition of these ethereal beings in the affairs of human life, is justified by Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, and all succeeding writers. Herodotus, l. i. c. 131, explains the reason why the Persians erected neither temples, nor images, nor altars, by saying, ὅτι οὐκ ἀνθρωποφυέας ἐνόμισαν τοὺς θεοὺς, κατάπερ οἱ Ἕλληνες, εἶναι, "because they did not, like the Greeks, believe the gods to partake of a human nature, or form." That the gods often appeared in a human shape, is taken for granted by Pausanias in Arcad. and Plutarch. de Music. The same opinion was firmly maintained by Julian, an orthodox Pagan, in a later age. Many instances will occur in the following history, to prove the exact conformity of Homer's descriptions to the general belief of his country.

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of those nations cannot reasonably be interpreted as a proof of their inferiority to the Greeks in manners or in policy. The masterly description of a philosophic historian has rescued the antiquities of one other people from oblivion; and the generous spirit of *their* simple, but manly institutions, as painted by his expressive pencil, is scarcely disgraced by a comparison with the boasted customs of the heroic ages.

In the preference of military glory to all other advantages, in the freedom of debate in the public assemblies, and in the protection afforded to the rights and liberties of the meanest citizen, the treatise of Tacitus will equally apply to the Germans and to the Greeks. But there is one material circumstance wanting in the German, which adds peculiar beauty to the Grecian, character. Among the rude inhabitants of ancient Germany, the offices of priest and king were not united in the same person. The rites of religion were administered by a particular order of men, who might abuse the superstitious fears of the multitude to promote their own selfish designs; and the dread of superior powers, though sometimes employed to enforce the dictates of nature, and to promote the operations of government, might also, with equal success, be employed to weaken the impressions of the one, and to resist the authority of the other. Besides this unfavourable circumstance, the superstition of the Germans was of a dark and gloomy kind, little connected with the ordinary duties of society, recommending principally the practice of

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courage, the only virtue which there was not any occasion to recommend; and promising, as the reward of what was deemed the highest excellence in life, the enjoyment of an infamous paradise of immortal drunkenness after death.[3] CHAP. II.

The religion of the Greeks.

The mythology of the Greeks was of a more agreeable, and of a far more useful nature. The sceptre, which denoted the connection of civil power with sacred protection, was conferred on those who, while they continued the humble ministers of the gods, were appointed to be the chief, but accountable guardians of the people.[4] The same voice that summoned the warriors to arms, or that decided, in time of peace, their domestic contentions, conducted the order of their religious worship, and presided in the prayers and hymns addressed to the divinity. These prayers and hymns, together with the important rite of sacrifice, (which likewise was performed by royal hands,) formed the *ceremonial* part of the Grecian religion. The *moral* was far more extensive, including the principal offices of life, and the noblest virtues of the mind. The useful quality of courage was peculiarly acceptable to the stern god of war; but the virtues of charity and hospitality were still more pleasing to the more amiable divinities.[5] The submission of subjects to their prince, the duty of a prince to

Its happy influence on society.

[3] Tacit. de Morib. German.

[4] Ποιμενες λαων.

[5] —— παρα γαρ Διος εισιν απαντες
Ξεινοι τε πτωχοι τε
All strangers and beggars come from Jove. Odyss. xiv. 56.

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preserve inviolate the rights of his subjects[6], the obedience of children to their parents[7], the respect of the young for the aged, the sacred laws of truth, justice, honour, and decency, were inculcated and maintained by the awful authority of religion. Even the most ordinary transactions of private life were consecrated by the piety of the Greeks. They ventured not to undertake a voyage, or a journey, without soliciting the propitious aid of their heavenly protectors. Every meal (and there were three[8] in a day) was accompanied with a sacrifice and libation. The common forms of politeness, the customary duties of civility, were not decided by the varying taste of individuals, but defined by the precise voice of the gods.[9]

The sanctions of their religion.

It would have served little purpose to oppose salutary laws to the capricious licence of Barbarians, without guarding those laws by very powerful sanctions. Whether these sanctions be founded on opinion or on fact is, with respect to their influence on the mind, a matter of little moment. The dreaded vengeance of imaginary powers may be equally effectual with the fear of the axe and halter. The certainty of this ven-

[6] Iliad, xvi. v. 385.

[7] It is not humanity, but the fear of the gods, that is assigned as the reason by Telemachus for not sending away his mother. Odyss. ii.

[8] Αριστον δειπνον δορπος.

[9] The King of the Phæacians does not detain Ulysses longer than he chooses, lest he should offend the gods. Odyss. viii. See also the behaviour of Ulysses and Telemachus, in the cottage of Eumæus, Odyss. xiv. & xvi.

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geance was firmly established in the Grecian creed; and its operation was supposed to be so immediate and palpable, that it was impossible for the inattention of men to overlook, or for their address to elude its force.[10] The daring violations of the sacred law[11] were speedily overtaken by manifest marks of the Divine displeasure. "The insolence and violence of the corrupted youths," says Homer[12], "cried aloud "to heaven, whose decrees were soon executed "by the avenging hands of Ulysses." The judgments inflicted on guilty communities were so familiar to the minds of men, that the poet introduces them by way of similies[13]; and it is evident from his writings throughout, that every important event, prosperous or adverse, which happened either to individuals or to nations, appeared to the pious resignation of the Greeks, the reward of their religion and virtue, or the punishment of their irreligion and vice.[14] The

[10] See the first book of Hesiod's poem "Of Works and Days," throughout: and particularly

Ω Περση! συ δ' ακουε δικης, μηδε βιην ορελλε, from v. 110 till v. 242: and again,

Τωνδε γαρ ανθρωποισι νομον διεταξε Κρονιων, from v. 274 till v. 291.

[11] Θεμιστας διος. Homer, passim. [12] Odyss. i.

[13] See a beautiful example of this, Iliad, xvi. v. 385. The expression of Hesiod is remarkable:

Παντα ιδων Διος οφθαλμος, και παντα νοησας,
Και νυ τοδε, αικε εθελησι, επιδερκεται, &c.

"The eye of Jove, that beholds all, and observes all, looks upon "these transactions when he pleases; nor does it escape his notice "what kind of justice is rendered in the city.

[14] The success of the Greeks against Troy proves both parts of the proposition. All the misfortunes of the Grecian chiefs were inflicted

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CHAP. II. merit of the father was often acknowledged in the protection of the son; and the crimes of a guilty progenitor were often visited on his descendants to the third and fourth generation. [15]

These observations are confirmed, not only by the writings of Homer and Hesiod throughout, but by almost every page of Herodotus, of Pindar, as well as of the Greek tragedians and historians; and yet they seem to have escaped the notice of some of the most ingenious inquirers into the opinions of antiquity. The authority of Greek writers strongly opposes two systems, which have been supported with great ability, and which have gained considerable credit in the world. The first, that the religion of the ancients had little or no connection with morality: the second, that the governments of Greece could not have been

as punishments. Oilean Ajax was slain for his presumption, by Neptune (Odyss. iv.); and Ajax, the son of Telamon, was a memorable example of the fatal effects of the same vice. When Minerva offered to him her assistance, he desired her to go to others, for the enemy would never attempt to penetrate where Ajax fought. Before his departure for Troy, Telamon prayed that the gods would give valour to his son; when the proud son, aspiring above the condition of humanity, said, That any man might be brave and victorious by the assistance of the gods; for his part, he expected to obtain glory by his own merit: — the gods punished him with madness, and, after exposing him to the ridicule of his enemies, made him fall by his own hands. See the Ajax of Sophocles, from v. 760 to v. 800.

[15] Minerva protected Telemachus on account of his father's merit. Odyss. passim. The misfortunes of the royal families of Thebes and Argos, exhibited in the tragedies of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, abundantly prove the truth of the last observation.

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supported without the doctrine of a future state.[16] The connection between religion and morality is clearly asserted in the various passages to which we have had occasion to allude; and the belief of a future state of retribution cannot, according to the principles of the learned author of the Divine Legation of Moses, be reckoned necessary to the government of men who are fully persuaded of the actual and immediate interposition of Divine wisdom and justice, to regulate, by temporal rewards and punishments, the affairs of the present life.[17]

[16] See Hume's Natural History of Religion, and Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses. The eleventh book of the Odyssey, which the ancients called the Νεκρομαντεια, is the obscurest, and, in my opinion, the least agreeable part of Homer. The ghosts are all condemned to a melancholy and dreary state; even the greatest heroes are very miserable and dejected; and there is not any mention of the place of reward for the virtuous, though the punishment of the wicked is clearly announced. Iliad, iii. v. 278. Homer speaks of the Elysian fields but once (Odyssey, iv. v. 563.) Proteus tells Menelaus that he is not *destined to die at Argos*, and that the gods would send him εις Ηλυσιον πεδιον και πειρατα γαιης; so that, if the language is not metaphorical, Homer's Elysium was only a delicious spot on this earth, and situate, according to Strabo's conjecture, on the southern coast of Spain. Strabo, l. iii. Ulysses (Odyss. ii. ver. 600.) sees the image of Hercules in Tartarus; but the hero himself, as the poet informs us, was feasting with the immortal gods. I have never met with any intelligible explanation of this passage, the absurdity of which appeared a proper subject of ridicule to Lucian, in Diogen. & Hercul.—Hesiod's Elysium is more agreeable.

[17] The gods, indeed, are sometimes engaged in very unwarrantable transactions; but these are only means to accomplish some wise and just end, which the will of providence, the Διος βουλη, or fate, had previously determined. Examples also may be brought from Homer, of men attempting to obtain, by costly sacrifices, the assistance of the gods in acts of injustice and cruelty. This must be allowed to be an inconsistency in Grecian superstition, or rather in the passions which gave it birth.

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Origin of the gods of Greece

As this persuasion had such general and happy effects on the manners of the Greeks, it may be proper to consider its origin, and to describe more particularly the nature and genius of the superstition to which it gave birth; a superstition which, two thousand years after losing its imaginary authority over the useful occupations of men, still preserves a real power over their most elegant amusements.

not explained in history.

It belongs not to the design of this work to search for the mythological tenets of Greece in the opinions of other nations: a subject of inquiry upon which much learned conjecture and much laborious ingenuity have already been very laudably, but I fear not very successfully, employed.[18] By the dim light of etymology and tradition, and the deceitful glare of legend and fable, inquisitive men have endeavoured to trace the corrupted streams of Pagan worship to the pure fountain of the Jewish dispensation.[19] But the majesty of Jehovah is very feebly represented by the united power of Homer's divinities; and the mythology of the Greeks is of such a peculiar texture, that, whencesoever originally de-

[18] Bochart's Geograph. Bryant's New Analysis. Fourmant, Le Clerk, de la Pluche, &c. Their doctrine is opposed in the extraordinary work of Vico Neapolitano, intitled "Principi di Scienza "nuova d'intorno alla comune Natura delle Nazione." The third edition of this work was published at Naples in 1744.

[19] The general doctrine of Providence, the rebellion in heaven, the state of innocence, the fall of man, atonement by sacrifice, a future state of retribution, for which the present life is only preparatory; all, or some of these tenets, are found in the traditions of all nations, Greeks and Barbarians. See Hesiod, Oper. & Di. ver. 110. and ver. 165. and Theog. ver. 725. and ver. 220.

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rived, it must have undergone a particular modification in the Grecian soil: nor is it easy to concur with the opinion of writers who bring it immediately from Egypt, Chaldea, or Lesser Asia, when we consider that there is not the smallest vestige in Homer of the judicial astrology which prevailed so strongly in the two first[20], or of the worshipping of idols, which almost universally predominated in the last.[21]

Philosophic account of it.

The difficulty of giving such an historical deduction of the Grecian faith as would not be exposed to innumerable objections, obliges us to trace its origin in the natural passions of the human heart; the hopes, the fears, the wants, the misery of man, which have in all ages rendered him a prey to the terrors of superstition.[22] This melancholy passion, which, in the civilised countries of modern Europe, operates only at distant intervals, and chiefly in the unfortunate moments of disease and danger, maintains a constant and uninterrupted power over the minds of Barbarians. The disproportionate force of the same principle among rude and among civilised men, is ascribed by a common proverb to the gross ignorance of the former; but it may, with more propriety, perhaps, be deduced from their precarious and unhappy manner of life, the continual dangers to which their condition is exposed, and the dreadful calamities in which the whole so-

[20] Diodorus Sicul. l. ii. Exod. chap. vi. Plin. l. xxx.

[21] The Old Testament, passim.

[22] Παντες δε θεων χατεσι ἐνδεμενοι — "All men stand in need of the "gods." Hom. Odyssey, iii.

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ciety is too frequently involved.[23] Even among polished nations, the power of reason and philosophy, however highly it may be extolled when the gentle current of life flows with placid tranquillity, always proves too feeble to resist the mountain torrent and the storm of winter. Under the pressure of sudden or inextricable calamity, all those, who are not more or less than men, have recourse to the immediate assistance of invisible powers; and, in the splendid abodes of wealth and power, as well as in the American village or Tartar horde, the æra of a famine, a pestilence, or an earthquake, is marked by sincere expressions of faith, and commemorated by signal monuments of piety.[24]

The great pillar of superstition, raised by the anxious passions of men, was fortified in Greece by a circumstance incidental to all nations at a certain stage of their political progress. There is a period when nations emerging from barbarity, but not yet corrupted by the narrow pursuits of avarice, not yet softened by the mean pleasures of luxury, or contracted by the dangerous refinements of a selfish philosophy, enjoy a peculiar sensibility of character, which exerts itself in the ardour of social affection, and strengthens, by a thousand associations, their belief of invisible

[23] Δυστυχιας επιτασις και σωτηριας απογνωσις ευχη θεων. Schol. in Homer. Tum præcipuus votorum locus est, cum spei nullus est. Plin. l. viii. c. 16.

[24] In most men, true religion itself must, from the nature of human passions, have the greatest, because an undivided, influence over the mind, in seasons of inextricable calamity.

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and intelligent powers. To men, thus disposed to wonder and to believe, whatever dazzles the imagination, announces the presence of a deity; dreams and celestial appearances are deemed sacred and infallible admonitions; the silence and thick shade of a forest fills the soul with religious awe; and persons, distinguished by justice and piety, easily persuade themselves and others, that, as the beloved favourites of Heaven, they are frequently honoured with holy inspirations, and sometimes indulged with the visible presence and happy intercourse of their divine protectors.[25] Not only the religion, but the ancient language and manners of Greece, sufficiently attest the existence of this excessive sensibility, which, in those early times, gave an easy victory to the indulgent powers of fancy, over the severe dictates of reason. CHAP. II.

The nature of the gods.

The nature, the characters, and the occupations of the gods, were suggested by the lively feelings of an ardent, rather than by the regular invention of a cultivated mind. These celestial beings were subject to the blind passions which

[25] Pausan. [in Arcad.) calls them ξενοι και ὁμοτραπεζοι, guests and *companions at the same table*. Plutarch, in his Treatise on Music, cites as authorities Anticles and Istros, two ancient authors, who wrote concerning the apparitions of the gods. All that has reached the present times respecting this curious subject, is collected in a dissertation of John Gottlob Nimptsch (Leipsic, 1720), in which he treats of the number of the divinities who appeared most commonly to men; of the form under which they appeared; the usual time, and general causes, of their appearing, and the ordinary circumstances accompanying it. See also Memoires de l'Academie, vol. ix. Mem. sur les Mœurs des Siécles Heröiques.

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govern unhappy mortals. Their wants, as well as their desires, were similar to those of men. They required not the gross nourishment of meat and wine, but they had occasion to repair the waste of their ethereal bodies by nectar and ambrosia; and they delighted in the steam of the sacrifices, which equally gratified their senses, and flattered their vanity.[26] The refreshment of sleep was necessary to restore their exhausted strength[27]; and, with the addition of a superior, but limited degree of power, and wisdom, and goodness, the gods of the heroic ages were nothing more than immortal men.

What was wanting in the dignity and perfection, was supplied by the number of the gods.[28] Homer only describes the principal and reigning divinities; but Hesiod, who gives the genealogical history of this fanciful hierarchy, makes the whole number amount to thirty thousand. Among these, every virtue had its protector, every quality of extensive power in human life had its patron, and every grove and mountain and river its favourite inhabitants. Twelve

[26] These observations naturally result from Homer; but the doctrine of sacrifices, as expiations for crimes, so universally diffused over the ancient and modern world, would perhaps still merit the examination of an able divine.

[27] Mercury says to Calypso, he would not have fatigued himself by travelling over such a length of sea and land, without a very powerful reason. Odyss.

[28] Fragilis & laboriosa mortalitas in partes ista digessit, infirmitatis suæ memor, ut portionibus quisquis coleret, quo maximè indigeret. Plin. ii. 7.

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divinities[29] of superior rank presided over the active principles of the universe, and the leading virtues of the mind: but even these distinguished beings were subject to the unrelenting power of vengeance[30] and the fates[31], "who pursue "the crimes of men and gods, and never cease "from their wrath till they have inflicted just "punishment on the guilty sons of earth and "Heaven."[32]

Particular effects of the Grecian religion.

The materials which fancy had created, poetry formed into beauty, and policy improved into use. The creed of the Greeks, thus adorned and enlarged, became the happiest antidote against the furious resentment, the savage cruelty, and the fierce spirit of sullen independence, which usually characterize the manners of Barbarians.[33] Yet these dreadful passions sometimes forced their way through every mound which wisdom had erected in order to oppose their course. Laws sacred and profane were feeble barriers against the impetuosity of their rage. The black vengeance of the heart was exerted in deeds of horror. The death of an enemy could not satisfy their inhuman cruelty. They burned with

[29] The Roman religion was mere plagiarism, so that Ennius might well translate two lines of an ancient Greek poet, which includes the names of the principal divinities of Greece and Italy:

Juno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars,
Mercurius, Jovi, Neptunus, Vulcanus, Apollo.
ENNIUS apud Apuleium.

[30] Nemesis. [31] Æschyl. Prom. Vinct. v. 515. & seq.

[32] Hesiod. Theog.

[33] Impiger iracundus inexorabilis acer
Negans jura sibi facta, nihil non arrogans armis— HORAT.
will be found the general character of all barbarous nations.

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desire to drink his hated blood, to devour his quivering limbs, and to expose his mangled remains to indignities equally odious and abominable in the sight of gods and men.[34] The powerful influence of religion was directed against the wild excesses of this sanguinary temper. The brave Tydeus lost for ever the protection of his adored Minerva by a single act of savage ferocity. Humanity was inculcated by every precept of reason, and enforced by the strongest motives of hope and fear. It was a firm article of belief, that hands stained with blood, even in the exercise of honourable war, were unworthy, till purified by lustration, to be employed in the most ordinary functions of sacred worship.[35]

Their peculiar excellence.

It would require a volume completely to illustrate the salutary effects of this ancient and venerable superstition, which was distinguished above most other false religions, by the uncommon merit of doing much good, without seemingly occasioning any considerable harm to society. The Grecian tenets, while they inculcated profound respect to the gods, tended not to break the spirit, or to repress the courage, of their warlike votaries. The ancient heroes addressed their heavenly protectors in an erect posture, with the unfeigned sincerity of manly freedom. They expected to avert the calamities threatened by the anger of their divinities, not by inflicting on themselves such

[34] See Iliad, iv. ver. 35. Iliad, xxii. ver. 347. Iliad, xxiv. ver. 212.
[35] Homer, passim.

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tortures as could be acceptable only to the mean resentment of weak and wicked beings, but by repairing the wrongs which they had committed against their fellow-citizens, or compensating, by new attentions, for the neglect shewn to the ceremonies of their national worship. In *their* estimation, the doing of injuries to men, and the omitting of prayer to the gods, were the principal causes of the Divine displeasure; the incurring of which, being justly considered as infinitely greater than all other misfortunes, they were solicitous to avert it, not only by an exact performance of external rites, but by a diligent practice of moral duties. The dangerous power of oracles, the abused privileges of asylums, the wild raptures of prophetic enthusiasm, the abominable ceremonies of the Bacchanalia, and the horrid practice of human sacrifice, circumstances which cover with deserved infamy the later periods of paganism, were all unknown to the good sense and purity of the heroic ages; nor is there to be discovered the smallest vestige of any of these wild or wicked inventions, either in the writings of Homer, or of his contemporary Hesiod.

The amiable simplicity of their religious system was communicated to the civil and military institutions of the Greeks, to the laws of nations as well as to the regulations of internal policy, and to the various duties of domestic as well as of social life. The sentiments of natural reason, supported by the supposed sanction of Divine authority, generally directed the conduct of men

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in the wide variety of these complicated relations; and from one great and luminous principle, deeply impressed on the mind, there resulted an uniform system of unaffected propriety of conduct, the contemplation of which will always be agreeable to every taste that is not perverted by the false delicacy of artificial manners, or the illiberal prejudices of national vanity. In order to give the clearer explanation of the several parts of this beautiful system, we shall examine the political, the civil, and the domestic condition of the Greeks; that is, the relation of the governors to the governed, and of the governed to each other, whether considered as subjects of the same state, or as branches of the same family. We shall combine the effect of these relations with that of the ordinary occupations and favourite amusements of this celebrated people, and from the whole endeavour to deduce the general estimate of their virtues and defects, of their happiness and misery.

Political state of the Greeks during the heroic ages.

The common observation, that power follows property, though not altogether correct[35], affords perhaps the best succedaneum to written laws, for determining the real strength and influence of the different members of society. If we examine by this rule the policies of the heroic ages, we shall find that they deserve the title of republics, rather than that of monarchies. When a war-

[35] The same property possessed by one, or by a few, confers much greater political consideration and influence, than it would confer, if diffused among the multitude.

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like tribe sallied from its woods and mountains, to take possession of a more fertile territory, the soldiers fought and conquered, not for their leaders, but for themselves.[36] The land acquired by their united valour was considered as a common property. It was cultivated by the joint labour and assiduity of all the members of the tribe, who assembled at a public table, celebrated together their religious rites, and, at the end of harvest, received their due shares of the annual produce of the ground, for the maintenance of their respective families.[37] Superior opulence gave not to one a title to despise another, nor was there any distinction known among them, but what was occasioned by the difference of personal merit and abilities. This difference, however, had naturally raised a chief or leader to the head of each society: the frequent necessity of employing his valour, or his wisdom, rendered his merit more conspicuous and more useful; and his superior usefulness was rewarded by the gratitude of his tribe, with a valuable portion of ground[38], separated from the common property. This was cultivated, not by the hands of his martial followers, who laboured only for the community, but by the captives taken in war, of whom a considerable portion

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[36] The Odyssey furnishes innumerable proofs of the limited power of kings. Ulysses, on most occasions, puts himself on an equal footing with his followers. It is commonly decided by lot, whether he shall be one of those who undertake any adventure attended with fatigue and danger. Odyss. passim.

[37] Isocrat. in Archidam. [38] Iliad, l. xii. v. 310.

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CHAP. II. were always bestowed on the general.[39] Being accustomed to command in the field, and to direct the measures, as well as to decide the quarrels, of his associates, he naturally became the judge of their civil differences; and, as the peculiar favour of the gods always accompanied superior virtue, he was also invested with the honourable office of presiding in their religious solemnities. These important functions of priest, judge, and general, which had naturally been conferred on the best and bravest character of each particular tribe, were, upon the union of several tribes into one state, or nation, conferred on the best and bravest of all the different leaders. Before the various states of Greece had united in a general confederacy, the resources derived from the domains appropriated to the prince (which, unless there was some particular reason to the contrary, were transmitted to his descendants) had enabled the several kings and leaders to extend their influence and authority. Their comparative power and splendour depended not entirely on the merit of personal abilities, but resulted in part from the extent and value of their possessions: and Agamemnon was appointed to the command of combined Greece, as much on account of his superior opulence, as of his many princely qualities.[40] But whether we examine the pre-emi-

[39] In the description of the shield of Achilles, Homer clearly distinguishes the domain of the king from the land of the community. Iliad, xviii. ver. 542.

[40] Thucydid. l. .

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hence that Agamemnon enjoyed over the other princes of the confederacy, which is fully explained in the Iliad, or the authority with which each prince was invested in his own dominions, which is clearly illustrated in the Odyssey, or the influence of a warlike chief over the several members of his tribe, which we have already endeavoured to delineate, we shall every where discover the limited power of kings, and the mild moderation of mixed government. As in the general confederacy, the council[41] of princes regulated the resolves of the monarch, and the voice of the assembly[42] ruled that of the council; so in each particular kingdom, the decisions of the senate prevailed over the will of the prince, and the acknowledged majesty of the people[43] controlled the decisions of the senate.[44] If we descend still lower, we shall find the same distribution of power in every particular village[45], which afforded a picture, in miniature, of a kingdom; while a kingdom itself afforded a similar picture of the whole confederacy.

[41] In matters of importance Agamemnon is generally determined by the council of chiefs, many of whom, on various occasions, treat him with little respect.

[42] It is referred to the general assembly, whether it would be better to return to Greece, or to prosecute the siege of Troy. Iliad, ii. ver. 110. See also Arist. Ethic. l. iii. c. 5.

[43] Several of the nobles of Ithaca even aspired to the crown. Odyss. 21.

[44] In the Odyssey, Telemachus threatens to appeal to the public assembly, of the injustice of the suitors, among whom were the principal nobles of Ithaca.

[45] Plutarch in Theseo. Odyss. ibid.

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Their civil regulations.

The same simplicity which regulated the political system, maintained the civil rights of the Greeks. As the price of submitting to the restraints of government, a man was secured in the enjoyment of his life and property[46]; his moveables were equally divided, at his death, among his descendants; and the unnatural right of primogeniture, which, in order to enrich the eldest son, reduces the rest of the family to want and misery, was altogether unknown to the equal spirit of the Grecian institutions.[47] Causes respecting property were decided by the first magistrate, or by judges of delegated authority. The prosecution of murderers belonged to the relations of the deceased; they might accept a compensation in money for the loss which the family had sustained[48]; but if this was not tendered them by the criminal, or if their resentment was too violent to admit of any such composition, they were entitled to the assistance of all the members of their tribe, who either punished the murderer by death, or compelled him to leave the society.[49] These usages, doubtless, prove the ideas of the Greeks, concerning criminal

[46] Iliad. xii. Pind. Pyth. Ode iv.

[47] Odyss. xiv. If there were no children, the nearest relations by the father's side divided the moveable property: αναξομεν δε δις κτησιν δατεονται χηρευσα. Hesiod. Theogn. The same observation is made by Homer, Iliad, v.; but there is no mention of succession to land or immoveable property.

[48] Iliad, ix. Ajax blames the obstinacy of Achilles, who refuses such compensation for an affront, as a man sometimes accepted for the murder of a son or a brother.

[49] There are examples of this in the 14th, 15th, and 23d Iliad.

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jurisdiction, to have been very rude and imperfect: but this disadvantage was in some measure compensated by their ignorance of those legal cruelties which in civilized nations are too frequently exercised, under the specious pretence of justice. "In later times," says Thucydides, "punishments became more severe, but crimes "were not, on this account, less frequent." The powerful or wealthy offender (he might have added) frequently eluded the vengeance of those severe laws; whereas, in the heroic ages, there was not any respect of persons, princes themselves being subject to the same moderate penalties[50], which were justly inflicted on their offending subjects. CHAP. II.

Regulations respecting the duties of domestic life.

The perfection of civil and political institutions, which was produced in Greece by the influence of religion, is found in most countries to be proportional to their improvements in arts, and their attainments in knowledge; while the happy effects of domestic union are frequently most conspicuous among rude and simple nations. The reciprocal duties of the governor and governed, as well as the mutual obligations of subjects, are gradually unfolded and enlarged by the progressive ideas of utility; but the tender connections of husband and wife, of father

[50] Thus Midon, the brother of Ajax, was obliged to fly to Phylace, Il. xv. Patroclus, for a similar offence, took refuge with the father of Achilles, Il. 23. Pausanias (in Eliac.) gives examples of the same kind in two kings of the Ætolians; and these facts are agreeable to the nature of the kingly office in the heroic ages, as described by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, l. ii. Hist. Rom.

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and son, of brothers and kinsmen, excite, without reflection, the warmest feelings of the heart, and at once inspire the affectionate sentiments of love and friendship, of kindness and gratitude. The dictates of nature alone sufficiently maintain the duties which correspond to the several relations of blood; her voice is strong and positive in asserting *their* obligation; and there is greater danger that these sacred ties should be weakened, or perverted, by the artificial refinements of polished life, than that their influence should continue altogether unknown, or be feebly felt, in the early periods of society.

Agreeably to these observations, we find in the history of the heroic ages, the most interesting pictures of conjugal love, of parental affection, and of filial duty. These sentiments, suggested by nature, and confirmed by reason, were still farther strengthened by the precepts of religion; and their force, thus augmented, became so strong and irresistible, that it can scarcely be conceived by men, among whom fashion, and vanity, and interest, have usurped the place of more generous and manly principles.

The comforts of a family were anciently considered as equal to the benefits derived from social union. To be destitute of the one was deemed no less miserable than to be deprived of the other; and the total baseness of a man's character was expressed by saying, that he deserved not to enjoy the rights of a citizen, the protection of a subject, or the happiness of domestic life.[81]

[81] Αφρητωρ αθεμιστος ανεστιος εστι ακοιτις. Iliad, passim.

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Marriage.

Marriage was a necessary step in order to attain this happiness, and the institution of marriage was ascribed by remote tradition to the bounty of the gods. The Greeks of the heroic ages, among whom the rights of weakness and beauty were as warmly protected as they afterwards were shamelessly insulted by their degenerate descendants, celebrated the conjugal union with all the pomp of religious festivity. The joyous band, carrying the nuptial torches, marched in pomp through the city, to the sound of the hymeneal song[52]; the lustral waters were drawn from the sacred fountain Calliröe, and many revered ceremonies rendered the connection of husband and wife equally respectable and binding.[53]

Adultery was considered as a crime of the blackest dye, and is always mentioned with the same horror as murder. Persons guilty of these atrocious enormities *purchased* impunity[54]; and more frequently escaped death, by voluntary banishment; but in many cases they were punished by the united vengeance of the tribe which had received the injury. Second nuptials were not absolutely forbidden: but so strong and sacred was the matrimonial tie, that even the death of one of the parties was scarcely thought sufficient to dissolve it; and the survivor, by entering into

[52] Iliad, l. xxiii.

[53] Thucydides, l. ii. Meursius Feriæ Græcæ, and the authors there cited.

[54] Odyss. viii.

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a new connection, suffered a diminution of fame, and submitted to a considerable degradation of character.[55]

Rank of women in the heroic ages.

Two circumstances chiefly have rendered it difficult to explain the rank and condition of women in the heroic ages. The Greek word denoting a wife, is borrowed from a quality which equally applies to a concubine, and the same term is used indifferently to express both. But the women who in ancient Greece submitted to the infamy of prostitution, were generally captives taken in war, who were reduced by the cruel right of arms to the miserable condition of servitude. Hence it has been erroneously inferred, that in ancient Greece, wives as well as concubines were the slaves of their husbands. This mistaken notion it has been attempted to confirm, not only by insisting on the humiliating condition of the fair sex in the later ages of Greece, but by expressly asserting, that, in ancient times, they were purchased by their husbands.[56] But this is to support one error by another. Before entering into the state of wedlock, it was customary for a man to make a mutual exchange of presents with his intended father-in-law. The Greeks had a particular term to express the present which he bestowed, as well as that which he received.[57] The for-

[55] Penelope was restrained from marrying a second husband: αιδομενην ανηνω ποσιος, δημιο τε φημιν. Il. xv.

[56] Lord Kaimes's Sketches, Thomas sur la Condition des Femmes, &c.

[57] Εδνα and προιξ.

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mer, which has no exact equivalent in the modern languages, is translated by the more general word "price," which has given rise to the false notion of the purchase and servitude of women; but the latter, which may with propriety be translated "dower[58]," was given as a provision for the wife, both during marriage and after its dissolution[59], and was sufficient to deliver her from that supposed state of dependence on the husband, which never had any existence but in the imagination of the systematic writers of the present age.

In the modern countries of Europe, women are generally excluded from the serious occupations of life, but admitted to an equal share in its gayest amusements. During the heroic ages, they were not absolutely debarred from the former, although it was impossible to associate their natural delicacy and timidity to the warlike labours and pleasures which formed the principal employments of their husbands. The intercourse between the sexes, therefore, was less frequent and general, than would suit the refined softness of modern manners.

Their occupations and amusements.

The attention of women was chiefly confined to domestic cares, or to the practice of such arts as required neither strength, nor courage, nor wisdom, but only the patient exertions of mechanical dexterity.[60] Our natural respect for

[58] Εεδνα.

[59] Odyss. ii. Telemachus says, that if his mother should be sent from the house, he would be obliged to restore her dower to her father Icarius.

[60] Homer, passim.

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the honour of the sex is offended at hearing them as much extolled for their skill in the labours of the loom, as for their beauty and virtue; but we must take into consideration that weaving and embroidery being, like all other arts, less extensively diffused in Greece than in improved commercial countries, were on this account more highly valued, and therefore better adapted to confer distinction on those who excelled in them. They were practised by females of the highest rank, and even by queens, who also thought it an honour to be entrusted with the education of their children till they became fit for the society of their fathers.[61] Besides these employments, the women were permitted to join in celebration of religious rites and ceremonies, and many of them were consecrated to the service of particular divinities.[62] In the seasons of public festivity, they mixed more freely than on ordinary occasions in the society of the other sex. This was sometimes attended with such inconveniences as might naturally be expected to arise in consequence of the usual restraints imposed on their behaviour. "The beautiful Polymela," says Homer[63], "dancing in the chorus of Diana, "was embraced by Mercury; but she had no "sooner brought forth a son, than one of the "principal citizens offered her his hand." The institutions of the heroic ages promoted, with ad-

[61] Thus, Thetis, educated Achilles. Hesiod says poetically, that in the age of silver, the children continued, during an infancy of an hundred years, under the care of their mothers.

[62] Theano was priestess of Vulcan, &c. Iliad. [63] Iliad, xvi.

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mirable propriety, the modest reserve of women, while they permitted not one unfortunate error to cover an amiable character with indelible infamy. The crime of having too tender an heart was not deemed inexpiable; and, as the consequences of female weakness were imputed to the affectionate ardour of some amorous divinity, they were so far from obscuring the charms of beauty, that they adorned it with new graces and more conspicuous splendour.

Conjugal love.

The simplicity of the ancient Greeks was equally remote from the cruel tyranny of savages, which condemns women to servitude, and the interested refinement of luxury and vice, which regards them as mere instruments of pleasure. The natural equality between the sexes, suggested by the voice of sentiment, asserted by the dictates of reason, and confirmed by the precepts of religion, produced the most delicate affections that can inspire a susceptible heart: hence those moving scenes so admirably delineated by Homer, which retrace the most perfect image of domestic felicity; hence those pleasing pains, those anxious solicitudes of tenderness and love, which frequently degenerate into melancholy presages of the loss of an union to which nothing was wanting but that it should prove immortal.[64]

Parental affection.

The sentiments of parental affection were proportionably strong and ardent with those of con-

[64] See the interview of Hector and Andromache, and other examples. Iliad, ix. and Odyss. vi.

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jugal love. The mutual tenderness of the husband and wife was communicated to their offspring; while the father viewed in his child the sweet charms of its mother, and the mother perceived in it the manly graces of its father. Independently of the delicacy of sentiments, there are, doubtless, in all countries, savage and civilized, innumerable instances of paternal kindness, which, indeed, is the most simple and natural expansion of self-love. But in the heroic ages alone, we find sincere and complete returns of filial duty. In the lowest state of savage life, men are, for the most part, little acquainted with this respectful affection: they fear and obey, but without any mixture of love, those who are wiser and stronger than themselves. When they become wise and strong in their turn, they disregard the trembling hand that reared their tender years, or if any faint emotions of gratitude are feebly felt, they discover them in the preposterous kindness of delivering their aged parents from what appears to their own juvenile impatience, the wretched load of life.[65] Among nations, on the other hand, who are sunk in the corruptions incident to excessive luxury and refinement, the ties of nature are perverted or effaced; the young despise the admonitions, and avoid the company of the aged; and the duties as well as the business of society, are degraded into a miserable traffic of interest or pleasure. But as the Greeks had emerged from the melancholy gloom

Duties of children.

[65] Voyage du Pere Charlevoix. Lafitau, Mœurs des Sauvages.

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of the first situation, and had not yet declined into the foul vapours of the second, they displayed the meridian splendour of the domestic virtues.[66] The reverence of children for their parents approached their veneration for the gods. The most violent and impetuous heroes submitted, without reluctance, to the severest dictates of paternal authority. In such delicate concerns as might seem to affect themselves alone, they relinquished their favourite inclinations, disavowed any will of their own, and committed their dearest concerns to the experienced wisdom and known goodness of their fathers. The amiable expressions of filial respect were extended into a more general sentiment of regard for the infirm and aged. Even among brothers who were nearly of the same age, the younger was obliged to yield in every instance to the elder; and it was an acknowledged principle of religion, that the Furies defended, by their stern authority, the sacred rights of superior years.[67]

Occupations of the Greeks during the heroic ages. State of the military art among them.

The occupations of the ancient Greeks, whether of war or peace, were, for the most part, directed by the same sacred influence which governed their behaviour in the various relations of domestic and social life. War was their principal employment; and in the field they both displayed their noblest qualities, and discovered the greatest

[65] There is, perhaps, no other language that can express, without a circumlocution, what the Greeks meant by θρεπτα, the obligations of children to repay the maintenance, the education, and the tender cares of their parents.

[67] Πρεσβυτεροις ἱρηνιες αιεν ἑποντο. Homer, passim.

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defects of their character. They were unacquainted with those disciplined evolutions which give harmony and concert to numerous bodies of men, and enable whole armies to move with the activity and address of single combatants. What was wanting in skill they supplied by courage. They marched to the field in a deep phalanx, rushed impetuously to the attack, and bravely closed with their enemies. Each warrior was firmly buckled with his antagonist, and compelled by necessity to the same exertions of valour, as if the fortune of the day had depended upon his single arm. Their principal weapon was the spear, resembling the Roman pilum, which, thrown by the nervous and well-directed vigour of a steady hand, often penetrated the firmest shields and bucklers. When they missed their aim, or when the stroke proved ineffectual through want of force, they drew their swords, and summoning their utmost resolution, darted impetuously on the foe. This mode of war was common to the soldiers and generals, the latter being as much distinguished in the day of action by their strength and courage, as by their skill and conduct. The Greeks had bows, and slings, and darts, intended for the practice of distant hostility; but the use of these weapons, which were much employed in the military pastimes of the heroic ages, was confined in the field to warriors of inferior renown.[68] Their defensive armour was remarkably complete: a bright hel-

[68] Teucer is more than once upbraided in the Iliad as a vain archer.

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met, adorned with plumes, covered the head and face, a firm corslet defended the breast, greaves of brass descended to the feet, and an ample shield, loosely attached to the shoulders, turned in all directions, and opposed its firm resistance to every hostile assault.

The effect of their military regulations on manners.

The close compact combats of the Greeks were fitted to excite the most furious passions of the heart, and to embitter national animosity by personal hatred and revenge. A battle consisted of so many duels, which exasperated to the utmost the hostility of the contending parties; each soldier knew the antagonist from whom he had received, or on whom he had inflicted, the severest sufferings. They fought with all the keenness of resentment, and often sullied the honours of victory by those licentious cruelties which are too natural to men in the giddy moment of triumph over a detested adversary.

It is partly to this unfortunate circumstance, and partly to the ancient mode of appropriating the warlike plunder to those who first acquired it, that we are to ascribe the shocking enormities which were sometimes committed by the bravest and most generous of the Grecian chiefs.

Laws of war.

That the severities exercised towards the conquered, proceeded not from the barbarism of the age, and an ignorance of the rights of humanity, is plain from the observances deemed necessary, in order to obtain the favour of the gods, in carrying on any military expedition, or in enjoying the fruits of victory. These observances, which were confirmed by the laws of nations among

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the Greeks, were practised before the commencement of hostilities, during their continuance, and after their conclusion. Before any war could be lawfully undertaken, it was necessary to dispatch ambassadors, who might explain the injury that had been done, demand reparation or atonement, and if this was refused, denounce in form the resolution of their community to prosecute its claim by force of arms.[69] After they had begun to execute their fatal purpose, the characters of heralds, those sacred ministers of kings, were equally respected by friends and foes. They travelled in safety through the midst of embattled hosts, proclaimed to the silent warriors the commissions with which they were entrusted, or demanded a truce for burying the dead, which could not be refused without enormous impiety.[70] The use of poisoned weapons[71] was forbidden, under pain of the divine displeasure. It was agreeable to the will of the gods that the life should be spared, when a sufficient ransom was promised.[72] And after a treaty of peace was concluded between hostile nations, without any apparent ratification but the honour of the contracting parties, the perfidious wretches who betrayed the sanctity of their engagements, were devoted, amidst solemn

[69] See chap. i. p. 43.

[70] Homer, passim.

[71] Ilus refused Ulysses poisoned arrows, since he revered the immortal gods.

Επει νεμεσιζετο θεες αιεν εοντας. Odyss.

[72] Iliad, i. Ibid. vi. 24.

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sacrifices and libations, to the fury of the terrible goddesses.[73]

Arts of peace.

From the arts of peace the Greeks had acquired the necessaries, and procured the accommodations, but had not obtained the luxuries, of life. Pasturage and agriculture supplied them with the most indispensable articles of food, and with the principal materials of clothing. The implements of husbandry were extremely imperfect; the plough itself, the most useful of them all, being composed entirely of wood[74], which arose rather from the scarcity of iron, than from any defect of mechanical ingenuity.[75] They employed, in the time of Hesiod, the invention of shears, for depriving the sheep of their wool, having formerly waited the season of its annual separation by nature.[76] Barley was the principal produce of their fields, and furnished the ordinary food both of men and of horses. The invention of mills was unknown, and the grain underwent several tedious operations, in order to facilitate the bruising of it between two large stones with the hand.[77] Although the Greeks cultivated the olive, they were unacquainted with the benefit derived from the fruit of this plant, so well adapted to cheer the melancholy gloom of night.[78] The Grecian soil

State of agriculture.

[73] Iliad, iii. [74] Hesiod, Oper. & Dies. [75] Homer, passim.
[76] Hesiod, ibid. [77] Plin. l. xviii. c. xiv.
[78] The Greeks had not discovered any other contrivance for that purpose, than the burning of great fires of wood. The torches mentioned by Homer consisted of branches of any resinous tree, split at the end, and lighted at the fire. Odyss. l. vi. ver. 307. l. xviii. ver. 306. & ver. 309.

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was naturally favourable to the grape, but the long and operose process by which the juice of it was separated and prepared, rendered wine scarce and dear.[79]

Mechanic arts.

Of the mechanic arts, weaving was the best understood; yet this, as well as all the other employments, qualified by the appellation of sedentary, were practised by the Greeks standing upright[80]; which seems to indicate an imperfect state of improvement. The hatchet, wimble, plane, and level, are the tools mentioned by Homer, who appears to have been unacquainted with the saw, the square, and the compass.[81] The art of cutting marble, which afterwards furnished Grecian ingenuity with the materials of those inimitable productions which are still the wonder of the world, was as yet undiscovered; nor did the polished lustre of this valuable stone adorn the habitations of the Greeks.[82]

Fine arts. Architecture.

Homer mentions not the orders of architecture, which were invented in a later age; and pillars are the only ornaments assigned to the edifices which he describes. The houses of the great were surrounded by a wall, and consisted of two floors; the lower of which was distributed into four apartments, which we have trans-

[79] Odyss. l. vii. ver. 122.

[80] Eustach. in Iliad. i. ver. 31.

[81] Odyss. l. v. ver. 234, &c.

[82] In the palace of Alcinous, which shone with gold, silver, brass, and amber, there is no mention of marble. Odyss. l. iv. ver. 72.

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lated by the names of hall[83], portico, antichamber, and bedchamber, words expressing the same relative situation, rather than any other point of resemblance. The roofs were flat, and the doors opened towards the surrounding wall, while the gates of the wall itself opened towards the road or street.[84] The invention of enamelled metals had been cultivated with singular success; and though painting, properly so called, was rude and unformed during the age of Homer, the genius of the divine poet has described the rudiments of his kindred art with such graces as would adorn[85] its most refined

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Painting.

[83] Ἡ ταξις ετως; ερκος περι ὁ αυλαι. μετα δε το ερκιον αυλη, ειτα ἡρ, αθουσα, ὁ προδομος, και θαλαμος. Pollux Onomast.

[84] Odyss. l. i. ver. 441.

[85] The nobler kinds of painting are all illustrated in the shield of Achilles; and each picture discovers a wonderful degree of *invention*, *expression*, and *composition*. Iliad, xviii. Perrault and Terrasson, who thought it impossible to place so many pictures in the circumference of a shield, were answered by Boivin, who supposed a great many concentric circles. This opinion was adopted by Pope, who pretends that all the branches of painting, even aerial perspective, may be found in Homer's shield. "That he was no stranger to "aerial perspective, appears from his expressly marking the distance "from object to object," &c. But this observation only proves that Pope, who practised painting, was little acquainted with the theory of that art; since aerial perspective has nothing to do with the diminution of objects in proportion to their distance, and relates entirely to the changing and weakening of colours, according to the condition of the medium through which they are seen. The objections of Perrault and Terrasson, and the concentric circles of Boivin, are equally frivolous. The shield of Homer contains, in fact, but ten pictures. The enumeration by the particles μεν and δε fixes the number. But the poet not only describes these ten pictures actually represented on the shield, but also mentions their antecedents and consequents. This is the chief superiority of poetical imitation above painting, that it can describe, in a few pages, what many galleries of pictures could not represent. But of this more hereafter.

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Music.

state of perfection. Music was much practised among the early Greeks. It was not of the learned kind, and therefore the better adapted to touch the heart. The effects ascribed to it are wonderful, but not incredible, because the ancient music was not merely an agreeable succession of harmonious, insignificant sounds, but an imitation and a heightening of the simple, natural, and pathetic tones and cadences of a beautiful and expressive language.[86]

Sciences.

In the heroic ages men had neither leisure nor inclination to attend to the speculative sciences. All the knowledge that they possessed or esteemed was of the practical kind. From arithmetic they learned such simple calculations as suited the narrow sphere of their transactions. Astronomy taught them to observe the constellations most necessary to direct the adventurous course of the mariner: but their navigation was still so imperfect that they seldom abandoned the coasts; and the only stars mentioned by Homer are the Great and Little Bear, the Pleiades, the Hyades, Orion, and the Dog Star. The metaphysics, ethics, and politics of the ancient Greeks have been explained under the article of religion, from which they were originally derived, and with which they long continued to be inseparably connected.

Education.

The main objects proposed in the education of the young warriors were, that they should learn to excel in the military exercises of the age, especially those of throwing the

[86] Odyss. iii. ver. 267, & passim. This subject will be treated fully hereafter.

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lance and of driving the chariot, and to command the attention of the senate, or assembly, by delivering their opinion in a perspicuous, elegant, and manly style.[87]

Ordinary amusements of the Greeks during the heroic ages.

It was not only in the council and in the field that these superior accomplishments solicited and obtained their well-merited rewards. Each community presented, in time of peace, the picture of a large family. The Greeks lived in continual society with their equals, enjoyed common pleasures and amusements, and had daily opportunities of displaying their useful talents in the sight of their fellow-citizens. The frequent disputes between individuals occasioned litigations and trials, which furnished employment for the eloquence and ability of men, in the necessary defence of their friends. The funeral games, and those celebrated in commemoration of several important events, both of a civil and sacred kind, opened a continual source of entertainment. There the young and vigorous contended in the rapid race; wielded the massy cæstus or ponderous quoit; and exerted equal efforts of strength and skill in the other manly exercises which confirm the vigour of the body, and the fortitude of the mind. Nor were the aged and infirm allowed to languish for want of proper objects to rouse their emulation, to flatter their pride, and to employ their remaining activity. It belonged to them to offer their wise counsels, to interpose their respected authority, and to

[87] Μυθων τε ρητηρ εμεναι πρηκτηρα τε εργων.

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decide the quarrels, as well as to determine the merit, of the young candidates for fame. The applause and rewards bestowed on him whose counsels and decisions were most generally approved, consoled the weakness of his declining years, while his rivals, though disappointed for the present, expected, on some future occasion, to obtain the same honourable marks of the public esteem.[88]

Estimate of the Grecian manners and character during the heroic ages.

After this general review of the Grecian manners and institutions, should we endeavour to estimate their value, they would probably rise in our esteem, on comparison, either with the rude customs of savage life, or with the artificial refinements of polished society. The Greeks had advanced beyond that uniform insipidity of deportment, that sullen ferocity of manners, and that hardened insensibility of heart, which universally characterize the savage state. They still possessed, however, that patient intrepidity, that noble spirit of independence, that ardent attachment to their friends, and that generous contempt of pain and danger and death, which render the description of the wild tribes of America so interesting to a philosophic mind. Of two principal enjoyments of life, study and conversation, they were little acquainted, indeed, with the consolations and pleasures of the first, the want of which was compensated, by the sincerity, the confidence, the charms of the second. Their social affections

[88] Iliad, xviii. Ibid. xxiii.

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were less comprehensive in their objects, but more powerful in their effects, than those of polished nations. A generous chief rushes to certain death, to revenge the cause of his friend; yet refuses to the prayers of an aged parent the melancholy consolation of interring the remains of his favourite son; till the corresponding image of his own father strikes his mind, and at once melts him to pity.[89] The imaginary wants and artificial passions which are so necessary to urge the hand of industry, and to vary the pursuits of men, in improved commercial societies, were supplied to the Greeks by that excessive sensibility, which interested them so deeply in the affairs of their community, their tribe, their family, and their friends, and which connected them by the feelings of gratitude even with the inanimate objects of nature. As they were not acquainted with the same diversity of employments, so neither were they fatigued with the same giddy round of dissipated pleasures which augment the splendid misery of later times. Though ignorant of innumerable arts which adorn the present age, they had discovered one of inestimable value, to render the great duties of life its most entertaining amusement. It will not, perhaps, be easy to point out a nation who united a more complete subordination to established authority with a higher sense of personal independence, and a more respectful regard to the dictates of religion with a more

[89] Iliad, xxiv.

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ardent spirit of martial enterprize. The generous equality of their political establishments, and their fancied intercourse with the gods, conspired to raise them to a certain elevation of character which will be for ever remembered and admired. This character was rendered permanent in Sparta, by the famous laws commonly ascribed to the invention of Lycurgus, but which, as will appear in the subsequent chapter, were almost exact copies of the customs and institutions that universally prevailed in Greece during the heroic ages.

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CHAP. III.

Distracted State of Greece. — The Heracleidæ conduct the Dorians into Peloponnesus. — Divide their Conquests in that Peninsula. — The Eolic, Ionic, and Doric Migrations. — Establishment of Colonies in Thrace, Macedon, Africa, and Magna Græcia. — Influence of the Ionic Colonies in Asia on the Affairs of the Mother Country. — The Abolition of Monarchy in Greece. — New Disorders in that Country. — Four Institutions which tended to remove them. — The Amphyctyonic Council. — The Oracle of Delphi. — The Olympic Games. — The Spartan Laws.

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State of Greece after the Trojan war.

Greece triumphed over Troy, but it was a melancholy triumph. The calamities of war were followed by disasters at sea, by discord among the chiefs, by ruin to the confederacy; yet these evils were less afflicting than the intestine animosities and sedition excited by the licence of the people, and fomented by the ambition of the nobles during the long and unfortunate absence of their kings. The victorious Agamemnon had scarcely set foot on his native land, when he was cut off by an adulterous spouse and a perfidious assassin.[1] His son Orestes found protection in Athens against the resentment of an usurper. In the eighth year of his exile he returned with his partisans, and

[1] Odyss. l. i. ver. 29.

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took just vengeance on the abominable Egystheus and Clytemnestra.[2] He reigned in Argos, but with far less glory than his father; nor did that kingdom ever thenceforth assume its ancient pre-eminence.

Weakness of that country during the four succeeding centuries. From A.C. 1184 till 776.

The wanderings and woes of Ulysses are too well known to be described.[3] His patient fortitude regained the kingdom of Ithaca, but not without wading through the blood of his most illustrious subjects.[4] If history minutely recorded the domestic feuds which prevailed in other states, it would probably exhibit a disgusting picture of fraud and cruelty, and a continual repetition of similar crimes and calamities would equally fatigue the attention, and offend the humanity, of the modern reader. But though it would be neither entertaining nor useful to describe the particular and transitory consequences of these disorders, it is of importance to remark their general and lasting tendency to prolong the weakness of Greece; whose obscure transactions, during the four following centuries, ill correspond with the splendour of the Trojan, or even of the Argonautic, expedition.

History of that period obscure.

The history of this long period is very confusedly and imperfectly related by ancient authors, and the chronology is throughout very inaccurately ascertained; yet such events as are either interesting in themselves, or had any permanent influence on the memorable ages of

[2] Odyss. l. iii. ver. 196. and ver. 305. et seq.
[3] Odyss. passim. [4] Odyss. l. xxii. ver. 290. et seq.

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Division of the subject.

Greece, which form the subject of the present work, may be clearly explained, and reduced to a narrow compass. In order to preserve an unbroken narrative, we must consider three series of events, which naturally followed each other, and which all pointed to the same goal. In this view, we shall first examine the migrations of different tribes or communities within the narrow bounds of Greece; secondly, the establishment of new colonies in many distant parts of Europe, as well as of Asia and Africa; and, thirdly, the internal changes produced in the several states, by their adoption, almost universally, of the republican, instead of the monarchical, form of government.[5] In the fluctuation of these commotions, we must then seek for the seeds of order and stability, and endeavour to trace, amidst extensive migrations, general revolutions, and unceasing hostilities, the origin and improvement of those singular institutions which tended to unite, to polish, and to adorn the scattered and still spreading branches of the Grecian race through every part of the world.

Migrations of the Hellenic tribes or communities,

The migrations, which soon followed the Trojan expedition, are mentioned, but not explained, by historians. Their general cause may be discovered in Homer, whose poems, no less instructive than agreeable, can alone enable us to travel with equal security and pleasure in the dark regions of Grecian antiquity. Domestic dissension, and, still more, the unsettled tenure

[5] Velleius Patercul. l. i.

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of landed property, as described by that immortal poet, naturally engaged the Grecian tribes, notwithstanding their acquaintance with agriculture, often to change their respective habitations. The idea of a separate property in land is the principal tie which binds men to particular districts. The avarice of individuals is unwilling to relinquish the fields, which it has been the great object of their industry to cultivate and to adorn, and their pride is averse to a separation from their hereditary establishments. These passions, which cover the black heaths and inhospitable mountains of the north with fair and populous cities, while far more inviting regions of the earth still remain destitute of inhabitants, could not have much influence on a people, who regarded land as the property of the public, rather than of individuals. In such a nation, men are connected with the territory which they inhabit, only as members of a particular community, and when exposed to any slight inconvenience at home, or allured by fairer prospects from abroad, they issue forth with one accord to acquire, by their united valour, more secure or more agreeable settlements. Governed by motives of this kind, a tribe of Bœotians, soon after the Trojan war, seized the rich vale of Thessalian Arné. The same restless spirit urged a warlike band of Thessalians to quit the seats of their ancestors. The new emigrants poured down with resistless violence on the unprepared Bœotians, who were thus reluctantly compelled, sixty years after the

in the north of Greece. A.C. 1124.

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taking of Troy, to rejoin their brethren in the ancient kingdom of Cadmus.[6]

The descendants of Hercules conduct the Dorians into the Peloponnesus. A.C.1104

Twenty years after this event, a more extensive migration totally changed the affairs of the Peloponnesus; and, in its consequences, gave new inhabitants to the whole western coast of Asia Minor. The rival families of Perseus and Pelops anciently contended for the dominion of the Grecian peninsula. The fortune of the Pelopidæ prevailed; but their superiority led them rather to persecute, than to forgive, their enemies. The descendants and partisans of the great Hercules, the most illustrious hero of the Perseid line, were divested of their possessions, and driven into banishment. The exiles were first received by the Athenians, whose more humane, or more enlarged policy, rendered Attica, ever since the reign of Theseus, the ordinary resource of the miserable.[7] Their leader Hyllus was afterwards adopted by Epalius, the aged King of Doris; and the death of their benefactor soon made the Heracleidæ masters of that mountainous province.[8] But the wilds of Oeta and Parnassus were little fitted to satisfy men, whose ancestors had enjoyed far more valuable possessions. Their natural ambition was long repressed by the growing greatness of the Pelopidæ, and the glory of Agamemnon. After the unexpected disasters of that prince, they twice attempted, unsuccessfully, to break through the

[6] Thucydid. l. i. p. 9. & 10. Diodor. l. iv. Strabo, l. ix. p. 630. Pausan. l. ix. c. 40.

[7] Lysias Orat. Funeb. [8] Strabo, l. ix. p. 427.

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Corinthian isthmus, and to recover their ancient dominion in Argos and Lacedæmon.[9]

Their auxiliaries in that enterprise.

Instructed by past miscarriages, Temenus, Cresphontes, and Aristodemus, descendants in the fifth degree from Hercules, finally abandoned the hopeless design of entering the Peloponnesus by land. But determining to use every exertion for regaining their hereditary establishments, they set themselves, with great industry, to prepare transports in a convenient harbour, at the northern extremity of the Corinthian gulph, which, in consequence of this transaction, received, and thenceforth retained, the name of Naupactus. The warlike and rapacious Ætolians, whose leader Oxylus was nearly related to the family of Hercules, readily assisted their labours with a view to share the booty that might accrue from the expedition. The Dorians, who inhabited the neighbourhood of mount Pindus, cheerfully deserted the gloomy solitude of their woods, in order to seek possessions in a more agreeable and better cultivated country. Animated by these reinforcements, the Heracleidæ redoubled their diligence. All necessary preparations were made for the invasion: yet their confidence in arms excluded not the use of artifice. By secret intrigues they gained a party in Lacedæmon; and, before setting sail, they prudently detached a body of light-armed troops, whose appearance at the Isthmus drew the strength of the enemy towards that quarter.[10] Meanwhile their armament

They take possession of five provinces in that peninsula.

[9] Herodot. l. ix. c. xxvi. Apollodor. l. iii. c. v. & vi.
[10] Pausan. l. ii. c. xviii.

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was carried by a favourable gale towards the eastern coast of Peloponnesus. The Heracleidæ landed their followers without opposition, and assailed the defenceless territories to which they had long laid claim, comprehending the whole peninsula, except the central province of Arcadia, and the maritime district of Achaia. The five other provinces were conquered at the same time, though by different means. Laconia was betrayed to the invaders [11]; Argos acknowledged their authority; Corinth, Elis, and Messenia, submitted to their arms. The revolution was complete, and effected with little bloodshed, but not without great oppression of the ancient inhabitants, many of whom emigrated, and many were reduced into slavery.[12]

CHAP. III. A.C. 1104.

Division of their conquests.

The Heracleidæ, agreeably to the custom of that age, divided their new acquisitions by lot. The kingdom of Argos fell to the share of Temenus; Cresphontes obtained Messenia; and, as Aristodemus then happened to die, Laconia was set apart for his infant sons, the twin-brothers, Eurysthenes and Procles. Corinth was bestowed on their kinsman Aletes; and Elis given to Oxylus, their brave Ætolian ally.[13] This distribution, however, referred only to the royal dignity, then extremely limited, and to an appropriate domain to the several princes in their respective allotments. The rest of the territory

[11] Strabo, l. viii. p. 365.

[12] Herodot. l. vi. c. 52. Polyb. l. ii. p. 178. Strabo, l. viii. p. 383. Pausan. Argolic. & Isocrat. Panathen.

[13] Pausan. Ibid.

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was divided among the warlike Dorians and Ætolians, who had conquered for themselves, not for their leaders[14]; and who, having overrun, without opposition, the finest provinces of the Peloponnesus, could not willingly return to lead a life of hardship and misery on their native mountains.

Fate of the expelled princes of those countries.

Before this important revolution, Argos and Lacedæmon were subject to Tisamenus, grandson of Agamemnon; Messenia was governed by Melanthus, a descendant of the venerated Nestor. These princes had not so far degenerated from the glory of their ancestors, as to submit to become subjects in the countries where they had long reigned. On the false first alarm of invasion, occasioned by the appearance of light troops at the Isthmus, Tisamenus and Melanthus had taken the field with the flower of the Argive and Messenian nations. But while they prepared to repel the expected inroads from the north, they received the melancholy intelligence that their kingdoms had been attacked on another side, on which they thought them secure. Instead of returning southward to dispossess the Heracleidæ, an enterprise too daring to afford any prospect of success, Tisamenus turned his arms against the Ionians, who inhabited the southern shore of the Corinthian gulph. An obstinate battle was fought, which proved fatal to Tisamenus; but his followers obtained a decisive victory, and, having expelled or inslaved the ancient inhabitants, took[15] possession of that valuable

The followers of Tisamenus conquer Achaia.

[14] Isocrat. in Archidam. [15] Pausan. & Strabo, ibid.

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province, so famous in later times under the name of Achaia. Melanthus enjoyed better fortune. Accompanied by his faithful Messenians, he resorted to Attica, then engaged in war with the neighbouring kingdom of Bœotia. The Bœotian prince proposed to decide the contest by single combat. Thymætes, though descended from the heroic Theseus, declined the challenge. Melanthus accepted it, prevailed in the conflict, and the sceptre of the deposed Thymætes was his reward.[16]

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Melanthus becomes King of Attica.

The fermentation occasioned in Greece by so many expulsions and migrations, expanded itself through the islands and coasts of Asia Minor. Many Peloponnesian fugitives, who beheld with indignation the calamities inflicted on their country, flocked to the standard of Penthilus[17], a younger brother of Tisamenus, who had taken refuge in Eubœa. Others followed the banners of Cleues and Melaus[18], also descendants of Agamemnon. The partizans of all these princes having unsuccessfully traversed the northern parts of Greece in quest of new settlements, finally yielded to the dictates of their enterprising spirit, crossed the Hellespont eighty-eight years after the taking of Troy, and established themselves along the shore of the ancient kingdom of Priam. They gradually diffused their colonies from Cyzicus on the Propontis to the

The Eolic migration, B.C.1096.

[16] Strabo, l. ix. p. 393. Herodot. l. v. c. 65.
[17] Strabo, l. ix. p. 402. [18] Idem, l. xiii. p. 582, et seq.

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mouth of the river Hermus[19]; which delightful country, together with the isle of Lesbos, thenceforth received the name of Eolis or Eolia, to denote that its inhabitants belonged to the Eolian branch of the Hellenic race.[20]

Rivalship between the Ionians and Dorians.

Consequences still more important resulted from the expulsion of the Achæans by the followers of Tisamenus. The ancient inhabitants of Achaia, being themselves Ionians, took refuge with their kinsmen in Attica. The Messenian fugitives under Melanthus had sought protection in the same country. The Athenians readily accepted these new accessions of strength, being inspired with a well-founded jealousy of the Dorian conquerors of Peloponnesus, whose ambition early produced that memorable rivalship between the Doric and Ionic race, which subsisted to the latest times of the Grecian re-

A.C.1089.

publics.[21] In the reign of Codrus, son of Melanthus, the Dorians had already incroached on the Athenian frontier, and seized the territory of Megara, on the northern coast of the Saronic gulph.[22] Issuing from their strong-holds in that rocky district, from which it was long impossible to dislodge them, they harassed the Athenians in a cruel war, concerning which a superstitious rumour prevailed, that they should finally remain conquerors, provided they abstained from injuring the person of the Athenian

[19] Idem, ibid. & Herodot. l. i. c. 151.
[20] Herodot. l. i. c. 151. [21] Herodot. Thucyd. & Diod. passim.
[22] Strabo, l. ix. p. 393.

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king. Codrus, hearing the report, was inspired with the spirit of heroism congenial to his family. Disguising himself in the habit of a peasant, he proceeded to the quarters of the enemy; insulted a Dorian soldier; a combat ensued; Codrus fell[23]; his body was recognized: and the superstitious Peloponnesians, now despairing of success, suspended their hostilities. The inimitable merit of a prince, who had devoted himself to death for the safety of his country, furnished the Athenians with a pretence for abolishing the royal authority. None of the human race, they declared, was worthy to succeed Codrus; and none but Jupiter should thenceforth reign in Athens.[24] Medon, the eldest son of that admired prince, was appointed first magistrate of the republic under the humbler title of archon. His brothers, Neleus and Androclus, probably dissatisfied with these transactions, determined to leave their country. Their design was approved by the Achæan and Messenian refugees, and by many Athenian citizens, who complained that Attica was too narrow and barren to maintain the encreasing numbers of its inhabitants. The restless spirits in Phocis, Bœotia, and other neighbouring provinces, eagerly joined the emigrants. They sailed to Asia Minor; expelled the ancient inhabitants, a mixed race of Lydians, Carians, and Pelasgi; and seized the central and most beautiful portion of the Asiatic coast.[25] Their colonies were gradually diffused from the banks of the Hermus to the promontory of Po-

Codrus devotes himself to death for his country.

A.C.1068. Royalty abolished in Athens.

The Ionic migration. A.C.1055.

[23] Pausan. l. vii. c. 25. Justin. l. ii.

[24] Pausan. l. vii. c. 2.

[25] Herodot. l. i. c. 142.

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sideion. They afterwards took possession of Chios and Samos; and all these countries were united by the common name of Ionia, to denote that the Ionians composed the most numerous division of the colony.[26]

Greek colonies established in Macedon, Thrace, Africa, Magna Græcia, &c.

During the same turbulent ages, intestine sedition, foreign invasion, or the restless spirit of adventure and rapine, occasioned other important extensions of Grecian colonization. The most numerous colonies occupied the isles of the Ionian and Ægæan seas, the southern coast of Italy almost intersected by the former, and the winding shores of Asia Minor[27] so beautifully diversified by the latter. The larger islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and Cyprus, were very anciently planted by Greeks. While the Hellenic stock pushed forth these vigorous shoots towards the east and west, very considerable branches extended towards the north and south. The maritime parts of Epirus, Macedonia, and Thrace, themselves abounding in Greek settlements, poured forth new colonies, along the European shores of the Propontis and Euxine[28]; and emigrants from the Peloponnesus having early established themselves on the opposite coast of Africa, were gradually diffused from the confines of Egypt to the Syrtic gulph.[29] The history of all these colonies, some of which rivalled in arts, and others in arms, the glory of the mother-country, will

[26] Strabo, l. xiv. p. 632. et seq. Pausan. l. vii. c. 2.
[27] Thucydid. l. i. & Strabo, passim.
[28] Herodot. l. ii. & l. iv.
[29] Herodot. l. iv. c. 147. Strabo, l. x. & l. xvii.

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merit our attention, in proportion as they emerge from obscurity, and take a station in the general system of Grecian politics. CHAP. III.

The Asiatic Greeks, whose affairs first became intimately connected with those of the mother-country, received a considerable accession of strength in consequence of the renewal of hostilities between the Athenians and Dorians. The latter were finally expelled from most of their strong-holds in Megara. Disdaining after this misfortune to return into the Peloponnesus, many of them sailed to the islands of Rhodes and Crete, already peopled by Doric tribes; while others transported themselves to the peninsula of Caria, which, in honour to their mother-country, received the name of Doris.[30] The Doric migration. A.C. 944.

In consequence of this establishment, which was formed two hundred and forty years after the Trojan war, the western coast of Asia Minor was planted by the Eolians in the north, the Ionians in the middle, and the Dorians in the south. These original divisions of the Hellenic race retained in their new settlements the peculiarities of accent and dialect, by which they had been respectively distinguished in Europe[31]; and which, at the time of their several emigrations, prevailed in Bœotia, Attica, and Lacedæmon. The Bœotians, and Lacedæmonians, who claimed the first honours, the one of the Eolic, and the other of the Dorian name, adhered, with View of the Asiatic colonies. Distinction of dialects.

[30] Strabo, & Pausan. & Herodot. l. viii. c. lxxiii.

[31] Heraclid. Pont. apud Athenæum, l. xiv.

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little variation, to their ancient dialects: but the Athenians, more ingenious, or fonder of novelty, made such considerable alterations in their writing and pronunciation, as remarkably distinguished them from their Ionian brethren; and thus the same language came to be modified into four subdivisions[32], or dialects, which may be still recognised in the invaluable remains of Grecian literature.

Peculiar advantages of the Ionian colonies.

Of all these innumerable colonies, the Ionians will demand our earliest and most studious attention. They settled in a country of great extent and fertility, enjoying the most delicious climate, and peculiarly adapted to a commercial intercourse with the most improved nations of antiquity. Favoured by so many advantages, they silently flourished in peace and prosperity, till their growing wealth and numbers excited the avarice or the jealousy of the powers of Asia.

Their influence on the affairs of their European ancestors.

They were successively conquered by the Lydians and Persians, but never thoroughly subdued. Having imbibed the principles of European liberty, they spurned the yoke of Asiatic bondage. In their glorious struggles to re-assume the character of freemen, they solicited and obtained the assistance of their Athenian ancestors, and occasioned that memorable rivalship between the Greeks and Persians, which, having lasted two centuries, ended in the destruction of the Persian empire. In this illustrious contest, the first successes of the Greeks against enemies far

[32] Strabo, l. viii.

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more powerful, and incomparably more numerous than themselves, inspired them with an enthusiasm of valour. Their exploits merited not only praise but wonder[33], and seemed fit objects for that historical romance, which, in the progress of literature, naturally succeeds to epic poetry.

Connection of this history.

The writers who undertook to record and to adorn the trophies of Marathon and Platæa, had occasion to look back to the transactions of more remote times. But in taking this retrospect, *they* discovered, or at least *we* may discover by their works, that their inquiries began too late to afford much authentic information on that important subject. Yet, imperfect as their relations necessarily are, they serve to explain by what concurrence of favourable circumstances and causes the Greeks adopted those singular institutions, acquired that sense of national honour, and attained those virtues of policy and prowess, which enabled them, by the most splendid series of exploits recorded in history, first to resist, then to invade, and finally to subdue the monarchy of Cyrus.

Abolition of monarchy in Greece.

During the prevalence of those generous, though romantic opinions, which characterised the heroic ages, the authority of kings was founded on religion, supported by gratitude, and confirmed by utility. While they approved themselves worthy ministers of heaven, they were

[33] Τα εργα μεγαλα και θαυμαστα. Herodot. p. 1. The exploits which he relates, still more than his manner of relating them, render the work of Herodotus the intermediate shade between poetry and history, between Homer and Thucydides.

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entitled to due and hereditary honours[34]; but in the exercise of the regal office, they were bound to respect the rights, the sentiments, and even the prejudices of their subjects. The fatal dictates of ambition and avarice led them to transgress the prescribed limits, and to trample on those laws which their predecessors had held sacred.[35] The minute division of landed property, which had already taken place not only, as above mentioned, in the Peloponnesus, but in the northern provinces of Greece, rendered the nobles and people more sensible of these encroachments, which they must at once boldly resist, or submit for ever to the yoke of oppression. Reduced to this alternative, the Greeks were inclined by disposition, and enabled by situation, to prefer and to maintain the most honourable part. The prerogatives of royalty were not as yet supported by the exclusive right of the sword, by which a particular class of men might intimidate and controul the resolutions of their fellow-subjects. The more independent and illustrious citizens, who had been accustomed from the earliest times to come armed to the council or assembly, communicated their grievances, and took proper means to redress them.[36] Miltas, the fourth Argive prince in succession to Temenus, was condemned to death for usurping absolute power. Monarchy expired more honourably in Attica; it perished still more disgracefully in Arcadia; but was gradually abolished in every province

[34] Επι ρητοις γερασι πατρικαι Βασιλειαι. Thucydid. l. i.
[35] Thucydid. l. i. p. 10. [36] Aristot. Polit. l. iv. c. 13.

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of Greece, except Sparta alone, from the southern extremity of Peloponnesus to the northern frontier of Thessaly.[37]

Accumulated disorders in that country.

The important, though remote consequences of this revolution, will be explained in the sequel. Its immediate tendency served only to multiply the evils which it was designed to remedy. Greece, oppressed by its kings, was still more oppressed by its archons, or magistrates[38]; and, already too much divided under the ancient government, was still more subdivided under the new form of polity. Many inferior cities disdained the jurisdiction of their respective capitals. Several of them affected separate and independent sovereignty. Each town, each district, maintained war with its neighbours; and the fanciful state of nature, according to the philosophy of Hobbes, was actually realized in that distracted country.[39]

Circumstances which tended to remove them.

The authority of the Amphictyonic council extended.

From these accumulated disorders, which seemed scarcely capable of augmentation, it is time to turn our view to those events and causes which operated in a contrary direction, and gradually introduced union and happiness. The Dorian conquest of Peloponnesus, otherwise productive of much confusion and bloodshed in that peninsula, greatly extended, however, the salutary influence of the Amphictyonic council. In the northern parts of Greece, this institution, which had been originally intended to prevent

[37] Thucydid. l. i. p. 10.
[38] Aristot. Polit. l. iv. c. 13. Plut. in Solon.
[39] Thucydid. ibid.

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foreign invasion, had been found equally useful in promoting domestic concord. The Dorians, being constituent members of the council, continued to attend its meetings after they had settled beyond the mountainous isthmus of Corinth. The provinces which they conquered gradually assumed the same privilege. The Amphictyons thus became a representative assembly of the whole Grecian name; consisting not only of the three original tribes of Ionians, Dorians, and Eolians, but of the several subdivisions of these tribes, and of the various communities formed from their promiscuous combination.[40] Each independent state had a right to send two members, the Pylagoras[41] and Hieromnemon[42], respectively entrusted with the civil and religious concerns of their constituents. The abolition of royalty rendering the independent communities more numerous, increased the Amphictyons to about an hundred persons.[43] The central

[40] The principal divisions were—

1 Ionians, among whom the Athenians held the first rank.
2 The Dorians, among whom the Lacedæmonians held the first rank.
3 The Eolians, among whom the Bœotians held the first rank.
4 Thessalians. 5 Magnetes. 6 Achæans.
7 Phithiotes. 8 Phocians. 9 Malians.
10 Ænians or Oetians. 11 Dolopians. 12 Locrians.

Confer Pausan. in Phocic. & Æschin. de Falsa Legat.

[41] Demosth. de Coron. sect. 51. [42] Suidas, ad voc.

[43] Thirty-one Amphictyonic cities undertook the defence of Greece in the Persian war. (Plutarch in Themistocl.) The one half of Greece, on that memorable occasion, remained neutral, or sided with the enemy. (Herodot. & Diodor.) If each city sent two members to the Amphictyons, the whole would amount to one hundred and twenty-four. But as some cities enjoyed the right of being

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city of Delphi, so famous from causes that will be immediately explained, was chosen as a convenient place for holding their vernal assembly; the autumnal was still held at Thermopylæ. An oath, guarded by the most solemn imprecations, was administered to each member, "that he would "never subvert any Amphictyonic city, nor "stop the courses of its running water, but pu- "nish to the utmost of his power those who "committed such outrages."[44] Their constituents, however, discovered, on innumerable occasions, that they thought themselves but imperfectly bound by this sacred promise. Every excess of animosity prevailed among the Grecian republics, notwithstanding the interposition of the Amphictyons. Yet it cannot be doubted that their authority tended sometimes to appease, sometimes to moderate contention; and that this respected tribunal, though deficient in coërcive power, had a considerable effect towards suppressing discord, and restraining the barbarities of war.[45]

The origin of Grecian oracles.

The Amphictyons gained much consideration, by declaring themselves protectors of the Delphic oracle, which had been growing to importance since the Dorian conquest, and which thenceforth gradually acquired an extraordinary influence on the affairs of Greece. It is seldom possible to explain the rise of institutions derived from the

represented in that council only in conjunction with others, this might reduce the number of members to that assigned in the text.

[44] Æschin. de Falsa Legat. sect. 35. [45] Plut. in Cimon.

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natural passions of men, or founded on prejudices as ancient as the world. The most probable information concerning the origin of Grecian oracles was conveyed to Herodotus[46], in a thin allegorical veil, by the priests of Dodona, and explained to that inquisitive and ingenious traveller by the priests of Jupiter in Egypt. In the fanciful style of antiquity, a black pigeon flew from the temple of Egyptian Thebes to Thesprotia in Epirus, perched on a spreading oak, proclaimed with a human voice, that an oracle of Jupiter should be established; and the inhabitants of the neighbouring hamlet of Dodona obeyed the divine admonition. In plainer language, a female attendant belonging to the temple of Thebes on the Nile was transported to Epirus by Phœnician pirates, and there sold as a slave. Her Egyptian complexion deserved the epithet of black among the mountaineers of Thesprotia, bordering on the Illyric hordes, who were remarked by the Greek historians for their blooming complexions, active vigour, and longevity.[47] She was said to speak the language of birds, before she understood the Grecian tongue, often distinguished by the appellation of human speech.[48] The enterprising female, though reduced to captivity among those whom she must have regarded as Barbarians, did not yield to despair, but dexterously availed herself of the advantages which she derived from her education and her country. In

[46] Herodot. l. ii. c. 54.
[47] Lucian in Macrob.
[48] Homer, passim.

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Egypt, superstition had been already reduced into system; and a pretension to prophecy was one of the most successful artifices by which the priests of Thebes long governed the opinions and resolutions of prince and people. Her attendance on the temple had taught her some of the arts by which this pretension was maintained. She chose the dark shade of a venerable oak; delivered mysterious answers to the admiring multitude; her reputation increased; success gained her associates; a temple rose to Jupiter, and was surrounded by houses for his ministers.

Reason why their authority was not considerable during the heroic ages.

This singular institution was imitated, at a very early period, in many provinces of Greece. The various and inconsistent accounts of similar establishments abundantly confirm the antiquity of their origin, and the multiplicity of temples, groves, grottos, and caverns, in which the favourites of innumerable divinities declared their will to men, proves them not less universal than ancient.[*] During the heroic ages, indeed, as illustrious and pious men believed themselves, on important occasions, honoured with the immediate presence and advice of their heavenly protectors, the secondary information of priests and oracles was less generally regarded and esteemed. But in proportion as the belief ceased that the gods appeared in a human form, or the supposed visits at least of these celestial beings seemed less frequent and familiar, the office of priest became more important and respectable, and the confidence in oracles continually gained

[*] Strabo, l. viii. p. 352. & p. 418. & Strabo & Pausan. passim.

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ground. At length these admired institutions, being considered as the chief and almost only mode of communication with supernatural powers, acquired a degree of influence calculated to controul every other principle of authority, whether civil or sacred.[50]

Circumstances which gave peculiar celebrity to the oracle of Delphi.

But these various oracles, though alike founded on ignorance, and raised by deceit, were not equally supported by power and policy. The crafty Cretans, (apt scholars of Egypt,) who instituted the worship of the Delphian Apollo[51], gradually procured the credit of superior veracity to the predictions of the god whom they served. Favourable circumstances concurred; the central situation of Delphi; the vernal session of the Amphictyons; the lustre derived from the immediate protection of that assembly; above all, the uncommon and awful aspect of the place itself, fitted to excite wonder in ages less addicted to superstition.

Description of that place.

That branch of the celebrated mount Parnassus, which divides the districts of Phocis and Locris, contained, towards its southern extremity, a profound cavern, the crevices of which emitted a sulphureous vapour, that, powerfully affecting the brain, was deemed capable of inspiring those who breathed it with religious frenzy, and prophetic euthusiasm.[52] Around the principal mouth of the chasm, the city of Delphi arose in the form of a theatre, upon the wind-

[50] Herodot. Thucydid. & Xenoph. passim.
[51] Homer. Hymn. ad Apollin.
[52] Diodor. Sicul. l. xvi. c. 26. & Strab. l. ix. p. 419.

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ing declivity of Parnassus, whose fantastic tops overshadowed it like a canopy, on the north, while two immense rocks rendered it inaccessible on the east and west, and the rugged and shapeless mount Cirphis defended it on the south.[53] The foot of the last-named mountain is washed by the rapid Plistus, which discharges itself into the sea at the distance of six miles from the sacred city. This inaccessible and romantic situation, from which the place derived the name of Delphi[54], was rendered still more striking, by the innumerable echoes which multiplied every sound, and increased the ignorant veneration of visitants for the god of the oracle. The artful ministers of Apollo gradually collected such objects in the groves and temple as were fitted to astonish the senses of the admiring multitude. The splendour of marble, the magic of painting, the invaluable statues of gold and silver, represented (to use the language of antiquity) not the resemblance of any earthly habitation, but rather expressed the image of Olympus, adorned and enlightened by the actual presence of the gods. During the age of Homer, the rich magnificence of Delphi was already proverbial[55]; and when Xerxes undertook his memorable ex-

[53] Homer has rather painted than described the situation of Pytho, Apollo's temple at Delphi:

Αυταρ υπερθεν
Πετρη υπεκρεμαται, κοιλη δ' υποδεδρομε Βησσα, &c.
Hymn. ad Apollin.

[54] Δελφος is explained in the glossaries by synonymous words, signifying *solitary, alone.*

[55] Ουδ' ὁσσα λαινος ουδος αφητορος αντος εφγει.

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pedition against Greece, the dedications in this pious treasury, accumulated from the superstition and vanity of Greeks and Barbarians, were held equivalent[56] to the revenues of the monarch of Asia, who covered the broad Ægæan with his fleet, and transported into Europe two millions of armed men.

The particular constitution of that oracle.

The protection and superintendence of this precious depository of riches and superstition belonged to the Amphictyons. But the inhabitants of Delphi, who, if we may use the expression, were the original proprietors of the oracle, always continued to direct the religious ceremonies, and to conduct the important business of prophecy.[57] It was *their* province alone to determine at what time, and on what occasion, the Pythia should mount the sacred tripod, to receive the prophetic steams, by which she communicated with Apollo. When overflowing with the heavenly inspiration, she uttered the confused words, or rather frantic sounds, irregularly suggested by the impulse of the god; the Delphians[58] collected these sounds, reduced them into order, animated them with sense, and adorned them with harmony. The Pythia, appointed and dismissed at pleasure, was a mere instrument in the hands of those artful ministers,

[56] See Dissert. sur l'Oracle de Delph. par M. Hardion, Mem. de l'Academ. The comparison was, doubtless, an exaggeration of the wealth of Delphi, which was little known till later times, when the Phocians plundered the temple of near a million sterling, without exhausting its treasures. But of this more hereafter.

[57] Strabo, l. ix. [58] Strabo, l. ix. p. 419.

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whose character became so venerable and so sacred, that they were finally regarded, not merely as attendants and worshippers, but as the peculiar family of the god.[59] Their number was considerable, and never exactly ascertained, since all the principal inhabitants of Delphi, claiming an immediate relation to Apollo, were entitled to officiate in the rites of his sanctuary; and even the inferior ranks of freemen belonging to that sacred city, were continually employed in dances, festivals, processions, and in displaying all the gay pageantry of an airy and elegant superstition.

Its influence in establishing the Olympic games and Spartan laws.

The subsequent history of Greece attests the important and salutary influence of the Delphic oracle, which no sooner attained splendour, than it confirmed, by its awful sanction, two institutions, the first religious, the second civil, and both accompanied with very extraordinary consequences. The Olympic games, and Spartan laws, were respectively established by Iphitus and Lycurgus, contemporaries[60], friends, both animated by the true spirit of patriotism, and unquestionably the most illustrious characters of the age in which they lived[61]; yet the roads

[59] Lucian, Phaler.

[60] Phlegon apud Euseb. Chronic. & Aristot. apud Plutarch. in Lycurg.

[61] Lycurgus and Iphitus are commonly supposed to have instituted the Olympic games 108 years before the period to which the Olympiads could be regularly traced. This was 776 years before Christ, when Corœbus won in the foot-race. See Pausan. l. v. Sir Isaac Newton considers the chronology preceding the victory of Corœbus as so extremely uncertain, that he proposes striking off the imaginary interval between him and Iphitus; which appears the

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which they pursued for reaching the same goal, the safety of their respective territories, were so widely different, that, while the Olympic games rendered Elis the most pacific, the laws of Lycurgus made Sparta the most warlike, of all the Grecian communities.

Remote causes of the establishment of the Olympic games, and other similar institutions.

It was held an ancient and sacred custom in the heroic ages, to celebrate the funerals of illustrious men by such shows and ceremonies as seemed most pleasing to their shades. The tombs, around which the melancholy manes were supposed to hover, naturally became the scene of such solemnities. There, the fleeting ghosts of departed heroes were entertained and honoured by exhibitions of strength and address[62]; while the gods, though inhabiting the broad expanse[63] of heaven, were yet peculiarly worshipped, by prayers and sacrifices in the several places, which sometimes the wilderness, and sometimes the elegance of fancy, had assigned for their favourite, though temporary, residence on earth. The lofty chain of Olympus, separating the barbarous kingdom of Macedon from the fertile plains of Thessaly, is distinguished by several circumstances, which seemed justly to entitle it to that honour. This long and lofty ridge ascends above the regions of storms and tempests. Its winding sides are diversified by woods, and intersected by torrents. Its fantastic tops, towering

more reasonable, because history is totally silent with regard to any occurrences that must have happened in the intermediate space of 108 years.

[62] Iliad, l. xxiii.

[63] Ουρανος ευρυς. Homer, passim.

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above the clouds, reflect, during day, the rays of the sun, and sometimes brighten the gloom of night with the lambent splendours of the Aurora Borealis.[64] This extraordinary mountain began naturally to be regarded as the principal terrestrial habitations of the gods; along the recesses of Olympus[65] each divinity had his appropriate palace; on its highest summit, Jupiter often assembled the heavenly council; and from thence, veiled in a white gleam, the protectors of mankind descended, and were visibly manifested to mortal eyes.[66]

While Olympus was considered as the general rendezvous of these fanciful beings, it was natural to imagine that the partiality of particular divinities might select other favourite sites on earth for their separate abode. The singular aspect of Delphi, or Pytho, which recommended it as the seat of the oracle of Apollo, and afterwards of the Pythian games, has already been described. The Corinthian territory was particularly consecrated to Neptune[67]; for where could the god of the sea be more properly worshipped, than on a narrow isthmus, whose shores were adorned by grateful monuments of delivered mariners, and which had continued, from early times, the principal centre of Grecian navigation?

[64] See the inimitable description in the 6th book of the Odyssey, ver. 42.

[65] Κατα πτυχας Ολυμποιο. Along the foldings of Olympus.

[66] Homer, passim; and particularly Iliad, l. xix. ver. 40.

[67] Pausan. Corinth. & Strabo, p. 382.

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Immediate causes of the establishment of the Olympic games.

A tradition prevailed, that even before the Dorian conquest, the fruitful and picturesque banks of the Alpheus, in the province of Elis, or Eleia, had been consecrated to Jupiter.[68] It is certain that athletic sports, similar to those described by Homer at the funeral of Patroclus, had been on many occasions exhibited in Elis, by assembled chiefs, with more than ordinary solemnity.[69] The Dorian conquerors are said to have renewed the consecration of that delightful province. But the wars which early prevailed between them and the Athenians, and the jealousies and hostilities which afterwards broke out among themselves[70], totally interrupted the religious ceremonies and exhibitions with which they had been accustomed to honour their common gods and heroes. Amidst the calamities which afflicted or threatened the Peloponnesus, Iphitus, a descendant of Oxylus, to whom the province of Eleia had fallen in the general partition of the peninsula, applied to the Delphic oracle. The priests of Apollo, ever disposed to favour the views of kings and legislators, answered agreeably to his wish, that the festivals anciently celebrated at Olympia, on the Alpheus, must be renewed, and an armistice proclaimed for such states as were willing to partake of them, and desirous to avert the vengeance of heaven.[71] Fortified by this authority, and assisted by the advice of Lycurgus, Iphitus took measures,

[68] Pausan. l. v. passim; & l. vi. p. 456.
[69] Iliad, ii. ver. 697. & Iliad, ix. ver. 623.
[70] Pausan. l. v.
[71] Phlegon apud Euseb.

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not only for restoring the Olympic solemnity, but for rendering it perpetual. The injunction of the oracle was speedily diffused through the remotest parts of Greece, by the numerous votaries who frequented the sacred shrine. The armistice was proclaimed in Peloponnesus, and preparations were made in Eleia for exhibiting shows and performing sacrifices. In the heroic ages, feats of bodily strength and address were destined to the honour of deceased warriors; hymns and sacrifices were reserved for the gods. But the flexible texture of Grecian superstition, easily confounding the expressions of respectful gratitude and pious veneration, enabled Iphitus to unite both in his new institution.

Description of the nature and design of this institution.

The festival, which lasted five days, began and ended with a sacrifice to Olympian Jove. The intermediate time was chiefly filled up by the gymnastic exercises, in which all freemen of Grecian extraction were invited to contend, provided they had been born in lawful wedlock, and had lived untainted by any infamous immoral stain. The preparation for this part of the entertainment was made in the gymnasium of Elis, a spacious edifice, surrounded by a double range of pillars, with an open area in the middle. Adjoining were various apartments, containing baths, and other conveniences for the combatants. The neighbouring country was gradually adorned with porticoes, shady walks and groves, interspersed with seats and benches, the whole originally destined to relieve the fatigues and anxiety of the candidates for Olympic fame;

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and frequented, in later times, by sophists and philosophers, who were fond to contemplate wisdom, and communicate knowledge, in those delightful retreats. The order of the athletic exercises or combats, was established by Lycurgus, and corresponded almost exactly to that described by Homer, in the twenty-third book of the Iliad, and eighth of the Odyssey. Iphitus, we are told, appointed the other ceremonies and entertainments; settled the regular return of the festival at the end of every fourth year, in the month of July; and gave to the whole solemnity that form and arrangement which it preserved, with little variation, above a thousand years; a period exceeding the duration of the most famous kingdoms and republics of antiquity.[72]

Its important consequences.

Such is the account of Grecian writers, who, doubtless, have often ascribed to positive institution, inventions and usages naturally resulting from the progressive manners of society. When we come to examine the Elian games in their more improved state, together with the innumerable imitations of them in other provinces of Greece, there will occur reasons for believing, that many regulations referred, by an easy solution, to the legislative wisdom of Iphitus or Lycurgus, were introduced by time or accident, continued through custom, improved by repeated trials, and confirmed by a sense of their utility. Yet such an institution as the Olympiad, even

[72] See the authors cited by West, in his Dissertation on the Olympic Games.

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in its least perfect form, must have been attended with manifold advantages to society. It is sufficient barely to mention the suspension of hostilities which took place, not only during the celebration of the festival, but a considerable time both before and after it. Considered as a religious ceremony, at which the whole Grecian name were invited, and even enjoined, to assist, it was well adapted to facilitate intercourse, to promote knowledge, to soften prejudice, and to hasten the progress of civilization and humanity. Greece, and particularly Peloponnesus, was the centre from which the adventurous spirit of its inhabitants had diffused innumerable colonies through the surrounding nations. To these widely separated communities, which, notwithstanding their common origin, seem to have lost all connection and correspondence, the Olympiad served as a common bond of alliance, and point of re-union. The celebrity of this festival continually attracted to it the characters most distinguished[73] for genius and enterprise, whose fame would have otherwise been unknown, and lost in the boundless extent of Grecian territory. The remote inhabitants, not only of European Greece, but of Asia and Africa, being assembled to the worship of common gods, were formed to the sense of a general interest, and excited to the pursuit of national honour and prosperity. Strangers of similar dispositions might confirm in Elis the sacred

[73] Pindar, passim.

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and indissoluble ties of hospitality. If their communities were endangered by any barbarous power, they might there solicit assistance from their Grecian brethren. On other occasions they might explain the benefits which, in peace or war, their respective countries were best qualified to communicate: and the Olympic festival might thus serve as a centre of communication and source of intelligence, and in some measure supply the defect of posts, gazettes, resident ambassadors, and similar institutions always unknown to antiquity.

State of Greece in the age of Lycurgus.

Iphitus did not, probably, foresee the manifold advantages destined to result from his plan. His main aim was to protect the small principality of Elis against the dreaded invasion of more powerful neighbours. This he effectually accomplished by fencing it round with a wall of sanctity, while his more daring associate fortified Sparta with disciplined valour. Yet Lycurgus had farther ends in view, when he proposed those celebrated laws, which were universally admired, but never imitated. Greece in that unfortunate age presented a gloomy picture of domestic discord. The elevated, though romantic, sentiments of antiquity had ceased to prevail; the heroic character was effaced; and the generous but often destructive expeditions into foreign lands, were interrupted by less daring, but still more fatal undertakings. The introduction of separate wealth had introduced inequality and ambition. Each petty prince was desirous to exalt his prerogative, and to extend

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his dominions. The passions of neighbouring princes balanced his desire of conquest. The resistance of his subjects counteracted his usurpations. Every kingdom, almost every city, was torn by a double conflict; dangers threatened on all sides; subjects expelled their kings, and kings became tyrants.[74] CHAP. III.

His justice exposes him to resentment in Sparta.

During these tumultuary scenes, Lycurgus, of the line of Procles, and commonly reckoned the tenth in descent from Hercules, received the Spartan sceptre upon the death of his eldest brother Polydectes: but the widow of Polydectes declaring herself pregnant, he resigned the crown, and assumed the title of protector. This delicate attention to justice, rare in that turbulent age, excited just admiration for Lycurgus, which was enhanced by contrast. The ambitious princess, more solicitous to preserve the honours of a queen than desirous to know the tender cares of a mother, secretly intimated to the Protector, that, if he consented to marry her, she would engage that no posthumous son of his brother should disappoint his hopes of the succession. Lycurgus feigned to enter into this unnatural project, but exhorted her not to endanger her health by procuring an abortion. When her delivery drew near, he sent trusty persons to attend her, with orders that, if she brought forth a son, the infant should be immediately carried to him. This command was obeyed, while he supped with the principal magistrates of the republic. He received the child

[74] Thucyd. l. i. Plut. in Lycurg.

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in his arms, saying, "Spartans, a king is born to "you!" Joyous congratulations followed; to commemorate which, the infant was named Chaerilaus, "the people's joy." Notwithstanding the fame redounding to Lycurgus from this transaction, the intrigues of the slighted Queen raised a powerful faction against him. He withdrew himself from the gathering storm: and, being yet in early manhood, indulged his inclination for visiting foreign countries; an inclination strongest in liberal minds, and most commendable in ages of rudeness and ignorance, when the faint rays of knowledge must be collected from an extensive surface.

His travels.

Collects Homer's poems, and carries them to Sparta.

The renowned island of Crete, which had given birth to the gods and government of Greece, first attracted his regard. The Cretans still partially adhered to the laws of Minos; but their island never resumed its pristine lustre after the fatal war of Troy. From Crete he sailed to Egypt, and carefully examined the civil and religious polity of that ancient kingdom. Despising the terrors of the sea, as well as the fatigues and dangers of unexplored journies through barbarous or desert countries, he is said to have reached the populous and flourishing kingdoms of the East: nor, could we trust the partial evidence of his countryman Aristocrates[75], did the remote regions of India escape his observation. He returned by the coast of Asia Minor, and observed, with equal astonishment and satisfaction, the innumerable Greek colonies

[75] Apud Plutarch. in Lycurg.

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that had arisen with such sudden splendour on the western coast of that valuable peninsula. The numerous advantages derived from this extensive view of men and manners, moulded by such a wide variety of religious, political, and military institutions, were all eclipsed by one discovery—the immortal poems of Homer, unknown to the Dorian conquerors of Peloponnesus, but carefully preserved among the Eolians and Ionians, whose ancestors they celebrated. Lycurgus collected these invaluable compositions; arranged the several parts; transcribed and transported them to Sparta[76], where, after two centuries of migrations and revolutions, the customs, as well as the sentiments described by the divine poet had been obliterated and forgotten.

The views which they suggested to Lycurgus.

Neither the astonishing invention of Homer, nor his inimitable fancy, nor the unrivalled copiousness, energy, and harmony of his style, so powerfully excited the discerning admiration of Lycurgus, as the treasures of his political and

[76] This fact is generally acknowledged; yet Plutarch tells us, that some writers were absurd enough to relate that Lycurgus lived soon after Homer, and others, that he had actually seen the divine poet. Homer describes the Peloponnesus with such accuracy, that the geographer Strabo follows him, as it were, step by step, through the peninsula. It is incredible, therefore, that he who was so perfectly acquainted with that part of Greece, should have been totally forgotten there soon after his own times. Homer, it has been often observed, preserves a remarkable silence about himself; yet his antiquity, were it not sufficiently evident from the internal proofs above mentioned, p. 50. might be proved from Odyss. l. i. ver. 351. and particularly from Iliad, l. xx. ver. 308. He flourished before the return of the Heracleidæ, eighty years after the taking of Troy; a revolution which, had it happened before his time, could not have escaped his notice.

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moral knowledge, which, being copied from the bright exemplars of an heroic age, might be employed to reform the abuses of a degenerate indeed, but not totally corrupted, nation. By restoring, in particular, the moderate spirit of policy which prevailed in happier times, the Spartan legislator might avert the most imminent dangers that threatened his family and his country. The royal families of Argos, Athens, and Thebes, had been reluctantly expelled by the resentment or caution of their injured or jealous subjects, who regretted that the regal power was so apt to degenerate into a system of oppression. The misfortunes which had abolished the honours, and almost extinguished the race of Atreus, Oedipus, Theseus, and so many other kings and heroes of antiquity, must pursue, and might soon overtake, the descendants of Hercules, whom the seasonable laws of Lycurgus maintained, during seven centuries, on the Spartan throne. The accumulation of private wealth, together with the natural progress of arts and luxury, would gradually render the possessions of the Greeks more tempting prizes to rapacity and ambition, in proportion to the decay of that courage and discipline which were requisite to their defence. The fertile plains of Laconia might again be ravaged by the arms of some uncultivated, but warlike tribe; Sparta might suffer similar calamities to those which she afterwards inflicted on Messené, and the alternative of dominion or servitude depended on the early institutions that should be respectively embraced

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by so many neighbouring and independent, and therefore rival communities.

The main aim of his legislation.

The sagacity of Lycurgus thus contemplating the relations and interests of his country and his family, regarded martial spirit and political liberty as the great ends of his legislation. These important objects had been attained by the primitive institutions, so faithfully described by Homer. Lycurgus determined to imitate the simple beauty of that illustrious model; and, to the end that the Spartan constitution might enjoy a degree of permanence and stability which the *heroic policies* had not possessed, he resolved to avoid the rocks on which *they* had shipwrecked, to extinguish the ambition of distant or extensive conquest, to level the inequality of fortune, to crush the baneful effects of wealth and luxury, in one word to arrest the progress of what is called the refinement, but what seemed to the manly discernment of this legislator, the corruption, of human society.

Circumstances which favoured his views.

To form such a design was the work of no vulgar mind; to carry it into execution required the most strenuous exertions of perseverance and courage. Yet, even at this distance of time, we may discover several favourable circumstances, which seasonably conspired with the views of Lycurgus; we may discover in the gradual display of his system, how the first institutions naturally paved the way for those which succeeded them; and while we admire the genius and the virtue, we must also acknowledge the dexterity and the fortune, of the Spartan legislator.

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The experience of history (and particularly the history which we have undertaken to record) attests the extraordinary revolution which one bold, wise, and disinterested man may produce on the affairs of the community of which he is a member. The domestic disorders which multiplied in Sparta after the departure of Lycurgus, obliged all ranks of men to look up to his abilities for protection. The animated declamations of Thales, a poet whom he had carried with him from Crete, and who rehearsed, with rapturous ecstasy, the verses of Homer and his own, singularly disposed the minds of men for adopting his proposed regulations.

His reception at Delphi.

But neither these propitious circumstances, nor the merit of ten years' travel in pursuit of moral science and political knowledge, nor the ties of blood, of friendship, and of gratitude, which confirmed the influence of Lycurgus among the principal inhabitants of Sparta, could have enabled this great man to establish his plan of government, without the friendly co-operation of the Delphic oracle, which, since the decay of the heroic opinions and belief, had become the sovereign umpire of Greece. The Pythia addressed him in terms of the highest respect; hesitated whether to call him a god or a man, but rather deemed him a divinity; approved the general spirit of the institutions which he proposed to establish; and promised to furnish him, as occasion might require, with such additional regulations, as (when adopted by the Spartans) would render their republic happy and immortal.

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Fortified by this authority, Lycurgus proceeded with a daring yet skilful hand, first, to new-model the government; secondly, to regulate wealth and possessions; thirdly, to reform education and manners; judiciously pursuing this natural order of legislation, because men are less jealous of power than tenacious of property, and less tenacious of property itself than of their ancient usages and customs.[77]

He regulates the distribution of political power among the different orders of the state.

The first rhetra[78], or laws which he established, tended to restore the mild moderation of mixed government, which distinguished the heroic ages. They confirmed the hereditary honours, but abolished the despotism[79], of kings; they enforced the dutiful obedience, but vindicated the liberty, of subjects. Of the reigning princes, Chærelaus owed to Lycurgus his throne and his life, and Archelaus deemed it dangerous to oppose his projects. Instructed by the fatal experience of neighbouring tyrants, they were both easily prevailed on to prefer a secure, though limited, to an absolute, but precarious reign. The superstition of the people could not decline the au-

[77] The only dangerous opposition that he met with, was occasioned by his laws respecting these objects. A tumult being excited, the insolent Alcander wounded him in the face, by which Lycurgus lost the sight of an eye. But the persuasive eloquence of the legislator quelled the sedition, and his moderation converted Alcander from a violent opposer into a strenuous partisan. Plut. in Lycurg.

[78] The word is synonymous with oracula, fata: by which names his laws were distinguished as the immediate dictates and inspirations of heaven.

[79] The difference between the βασιλειαι, or royalties of the heroic ages, and the τυραννιδες of succeeding times, is explained by Aristot. Politic. & Xenoph. Repub. Spart.

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thority of the legislator, when confirmed by the respected command of Apollo; and the interest of the nobles engaged them unanimously to promote his measures. With this illustrious body, consisting of twenty-eight chiefs, the most distinguished in the tribes and cities of Laconia, Lycurgus consulted by what means to prevent the political dissensions from settling in the despotism of kings, or in the insolence of democracy. By his new regulations, the ancient honours of the nobility were confirmed and extended. They were formed into a permanent council, or senate, which examined all matters of government before they were proposed to the deliberation of the people. The kings were entitled, as in the heroic ages, to be the hereditary presidents of this national tribunal; which, as in all important questions, it possessed a negative before debate; as the members were chosen for life; and, as on the decease of any senator, his son or nearest kinsman was naturally substituted in his stead, might have soon arrogated to itself the whole legislative as well as executive authority.

The Ephori.

In order to counteract this dangerous result, Lycurgus instituted the Ephori[80], five annual magistrates, invested with a temporary power to inspect and controul the administration of government, and to maintain the spirit and vigour of the established constitution. To the Ephori it belonged to convoke, prorogue, and dissolve

Nature of their office.

[80] Their name, denoting overseers, or inspectors, properly describes their office.

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the greater and lesser assemblies of the people; the former composed of nine thousand Spartans, inhabitants of the capital; the latter of thirty thousand Lacedæmonians, inhabitants of the inferior towns and villages. By frequently convening such numerous bodies of men, who had arms in their hands, they rendered them sensible of their own strength. The Lacedæmonians felt themselves entitled not only to execute the just, but to thwart the unjust, orders of the senate. Nor was liberty endangered by the limited prerogative of the kings, who monthly exchanged with the Ephori solemn oaths; the former swearing for themselves to observe the laws of Sparta, the latter [81] for the people whom they represented, to maintain the hereditary honours of the Herculean race, to respect them as ministers of religion, to obey them as judges in peace, and to follow them as leaders in war.[82]

His laws concerning property.

This equitable distribution of power was accompanied, we are told, with an exact division of property. At the distance of five centuries, it was the current tradition in Greece, that Lycurgus had totally altered the situation and circumstances of his countrymen, by the introduction

[81] The authority of Herodotus, l. i. and of Xenophon de Repub. Spart. refutes Aristot. Polit. l. ii. c. 6. and Plutarch in Lycurg. The last mentioned writers refer the institution of the Ephori to Theopompus, who lived 130 years after Lycurgus. But this assertion only proves that neither Aristotle nor Plutarch had sufficiently entered into the views of the Spartan legislator. The Ephori, as it appears from Xenophon and Herodotus, and from the whole transactions of Sparta, formed an essential part of his plan.

[82] Xenoph. ibid.

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of an agrarian law, similar to that which has been so often, but always so ineffectually, proposed in other republics, as the surest foundation of liberty and happiness. Yet the equal division of lands, or, in other words, the community of landed property, and the annual partition of the harvest, took place among the original inhabitants of Greece, as well as among the freeborn warriors of ancient Germany. It may be supposed, therefore, with a high degree of probability, that the Spartans, in the time of Lycurgus, still preserved some traces of their primitive institutions, and that their minds were comparatively untainted with the vices of avarice and luxury. To bring them back, however, to the perfect simplicity of the heroic ages, and to prevent their future degeneracy, the territory of Laconia was divided into thirty-nine thousand portions, each producing eighty-two medimni, or bushels, of barley, with a proportional measure of fruits, wine, and oil. The rich pasture-ground was probably left in common. The kings, as in the age of Homer, enjoyed their separate[83] domain, conferred by the voluntary gratitude of their subjects. The senators, contented with an increase of power and honour, neither obtained nor desired any pre-eminence of fortune. Their moderation in this respect afforded a salutary example to the people, the greater part of whom would

Equal division of lands.

[83] The τεμενος. Xenophon tells us, that it was always well watered; it probably consisted, as in Homer's time, φυταλιης και αρουρας, of plantations and corn land.

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naturally be gainers by the agrarian law, while the few who were rich, for that relative term always implies the smaller number, submitted without resistance to the wisdom of Lycurgus, and the authority of Apollo.

Introduction of iron money.

The equal division of land seemed not alone sufficient to introduce an equality in the manner of life, and to banish the seeds of luxury. The accumulation of moveable, or what the Greeks called invisible property [84], might enable the rich to command the labour of the poor, and, according to the natural progress of wants and inventions, must encourage the dangerous pursuit of elegance and pleasure. The precious metals had long been the ordinary measures of exchange in Sparta, and, could we credit a very doubtful tradition, had greatly accumulated in private hands. Lycurgus withdrew from farther circulation all this gold and silver, a considerable part of which probably repaid his gratitude to the Delphic oracle, while the remainder increased the splendour of the Lacedæmonian temples. Instead of these precious metals, the Spartans received pieces of iron, which had been heated red in the fire, and afterwards quenched in vinegar, in order to render them brittle, and useless for every other purpose but that of serving as the current specie.

Effect of these institutions.

Astonishing, say Xenophon and Plutarch, were the effects of this operation. With the banishment of gold and silver were banished all the

[84] Ουσια αφανης. See Lysias, passim.

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pernicious appetites which they excite, and all the frivolous arts which they introduce and nourish. Neither fortune-teller, nor physician, nor sophist, were longer to be seen in Sparta; gaudy trinkets and toys, and all useless finery in dress and furniture, at once disappeared; and the innocence and dignity of Spartan manners corresponded with the primitive simplicity of the iron money. But to reduce to the standard of truth or probability this very fanciful description, it may be observed, that the usefulness and scarcity of iron rendered it, in early times, a very ordinary and convenient measure of exchange. As such it was frequently employed in the heroic ages[85]; as such it long continued at Byzantium[86], and other Grecian cities.[87] The necessity of cooling it in an acid, in order to diminish its worth, indicates its high value even in the time of Lycurgus. The alteration of the specie, therefore, probably appeared not so violent a measure as later writers were inclined to represent it; nor could the abolition of gold and silver abolish such elegancies and refinements as surely had no existence in Greece during the age of the Spartan legislator. But it may reasonably be believed, that the use of iron money, which continued permanent in Sparta alone, after the vices of wealth and luxury had polluted the rest of Greece, necessarily repelled from the republic of Lycurgus the votaries of pleasure, as well as the slaves of gain, and all the miserable retinue of vanity and folly.

[85] Homer, passim. [86] Aristoph. Nubes. [87] Plut. in Lysand.

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That wealth is little to be coveted, even by the most selfish, which neither gratifies vanity nor flatters the desire of power, nor promises the means of pleasure. Upon the smallest abstraction, if avarice were at all capable of abstraction, the most sordid might sympathize with the contempt for superfluous riches, which could never be applied to any purpose, either useful or agreeable. What effort could the generosity of that people require, (if the indifference of the Spartans deserve the name of generosity,) among whom all valuable objects were equally divided, or enjoyed in common?[88] Among whom it was enjoined by the laws, and deemed honourable by the citizens, freely to communicate their arms, horses, instruments of agriculture and hunting; to eat together at common and frugal tables, agreeably to the institutions of Crete, as well as the practice of the heroic ages; to disregard every distinction but that of personal merit; to despise every luxury but that of temperance; and to disdain every acquisition but that of the public esteem?

Principle of the Spartan manners.

The general and firm assent to the divine mission of Lycurgus might excite the most generous and manly sentiments in the minds of his countrymen. The persuasive force of his eloquence, assisted by the lyric genius of Thales, a poet worthy of Apollo and his missionary[89], might enable the legislator to complete his beneficial and extensive plan. But there was reason

Ordinary occupations and amusements.

[88] Xenoph. ibid. c. vi.

[89] Plut. in Lycurg.

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to apprehend lest the system of Lycurgus, like most schemes of reformation, should evaporate with the enthusiasm which produced it, unless the mortifications which it enjoined were rendered habitual to practice, and familiar to fancy. His laws were few and short; for the sake of memory, they were conceived in verse; they were not consigned to writing, but treasured in the *hearts* of his disciples as the immediate dictates of heaven. The Lacedæmonians were severely prohibited from the contagious intercourse of strangers, except at the stated returns of religious solemnities. Lycurgus, who had assisted Iphitus in restoring the Olympic games, instituted similar, though less splendid, festivals in his native country. When unemployed in the serious business of war, the Lacedæmonians were continually engaged in assemblies for conversation and the gymnastic exercises, or in religious and military amusements. Agriculture and the mechanic arts were left to the servile hands of the Helots, under which appellation were comprehended (as will be explained hereafter) various hostile communities that successively fell under the dominion of Sparta, and whose personal labour was regarded as the common property of the public.[90] The sciences of war and government were recommended by the laws of Lycurgus, as the only pursuits deserving the attention of freemen,

[90] Και τροπον τινα δημοσιοις εἰχον δουλοις. "And in some measure, "they," the Lacedæmonians, "had public slaves." Strabo. See likewise Aristot. Repub. l. ii. c. 5.

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Their military institutions.

In the knowledge and practice of war, the Lacedæmonians (if we believe Xenophon who had fought with and against them) far excelled all Greeks and Barbarians. Courage, the first quality of a soldier, was enlivened by every motive that can operate most powerfully on the mind, while cowardice was branded as the most odious and destructive of crimes, on the principle that it tended not, like many other vices, merely to the hurt of individuals, but to the servitude and ruin of the community. The Spartans preserved the use of the same weapons and defensive armour that had been adopted in the heroic ages; reducing only the length, and thereby improving the strength of the sword, which was two-edged, pointed, massy, and fitted either by cutting or thrusting, to inflict a dangerous wound.[91] Their troops were divided into regiments, consisting of five hundred and twelve men, subdivided into four companies, and each of these into smaller divisions, commanded by their respective officers; for it was peculiar to the Lacedæmonian armies to contain comparatively few men not entrusted with some share of subordinate command.[92] The soldiers were at-

[91] Vid. Pollux, voc. ξυηλον.

[92] Thucydides, who remarks this peculiarity, l. v. p. 390. assigns the reason of it, that the care of the execution might pertain to many. The whole Lacedæmonian army, except a few, consisted, he says, in αρχοντες αρχοντων, και το επιμελες τα δρωμενα πολλοις προσηκει. It is necessary to observe, that the account given by Thucydides, in this passage, of the composition of the Lacedæmonian armies, differs materially from that of Xenophon. I have preferred the latter, first because Xenophon writes expressly on the subject, of which Thucy-

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tended by a multitude of artisans and slaves, who furnished them with all necessary supplies, and accompanied by a long train of priests and poets, who flattered their hopes, and animated their valour. A body of cavalry always preceded their march; sensible of the weakness of angles, they encamped in a circular form: the order of their guards and watches was highly judicious; they employed, for their security, out-sentries and vedettes; and regularly, every morning and evening, performed their customary exercises. Xenophon has described with what facility they wheeled in all directions; converted the column of march into an order of battle; and, by skilful and rapid evolutions, presented the strength[93] of the line to an unexpected assault. When *they* found it prudent to attack, the king, who usually rose before dawn, to anticipate, by early prayer and sacrifice[94], the favour of the gods, communicated his orders to charge in a full line, or in columns, according to the nature

dides speaks incidentally in describing a particular battle; secondly, because the observations of Xenophon relate to the age of Lycurgus, those of Thucydides to the time of the Peloponnesian war; thirdly, because, as will appear in the sequel, Xenophon had a better opportunity than any other stranger, of being thoroughly acquainted with the affairs of Lacedæmon.

[93] The Lacedæmonian tactics will be explained more particularly hereafter.

[94] Ου χρη παννυχιον δυδειν βαληφορον ανδρα
Οι λαοι επιτετραφεται και τοσσα μεμηλε.

Lycurgus, never losing sight of Homer, converted his advices into laws.

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of the ground, and the numbers and disposition of the enemy. In the day of battle, the Spartans assumed an unusual gaiety of aspect; and displayed in their dress and ornaments more than their wonted splendour. Their long hair was arranged in simple elegance; their scarlet uniforms, and brazen armour, diffused bright gleams around them. As they approached the enemy, the king sacrificed anew; the music struck up; and the soldiers advanced with a slow and steady pace, and with a cheerful but deliberate countenance, to what they were taught to regard as the noblest employment of man. Proper officers were appointed to receive the prisoners, to divide the spoil, and to decide the contested prizes of valour. Both before and after, as well as during, the action, every measure was conducted with such order and celerity, that a great captain declares, when he considered the discipline of the Spartans, that all other nations appeared to him but children in the art of war.[95]

Means by which Lycurgus maintained the populousness, and increased the strength of Sparta.

But that continual exercise in arms, which improved the skill and confirmed the valour, must gradually have exhausted the strength of Sparta, unless the care of population had formed an object of principal concern in the system of Lycurgus. Marriage was directly enjoined by some very singular institutions[96]; but still more

[95] Xenoph. de Repub. Spart.

[96] Bachelors were debarred from assisting at the female dances. They were compelled to walk naked through the streets in the winter solstice; singing a ludicrous song, which confessed the justice of their punishment.

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powerfully encouraged by extirpating its greatest enemies, luxury and vanity. But Lycurgus, not contented with maintaining the populousness of Sparta, endeavoured to supply the past generation with a nobler and more warlike race, and to enlarge and elevate the bodies and minds of men to that full proportion of which their nature is susceptible. The credulous love of wonder has always been eager to assert, what the vanity of every age has been unwilling to believe, that the ancient inhabitants of the world possessed a measure of size and strength, as well as of courage and virtue, unattainable and unknown amidst the corruptions and degeneracy of later times. The frequent repetition of the same romantic tale renders giants and heroes familiar and insipid personages in the remote history of almost every people: but, from the general mass of fable, a just discernment will separate the genuine ore of Homer and Lycurgus. The laws of the latter brought back the heroic manners which the former had described; and their effects, being not less permanent than salutary, are, at the distance of many centuries, attested by eye-witnesses, whose unimpeached veracity declares the Spartans superior to other men in the excellencies of mind and body.[97]

His regulations concern-

Of this extraordinary circumstance, the evidence of contemporary writers could scarcely

[97] As to the mind, the Spartans were, says Xenophon, σωφρονεστεροι, και ανδρειοτεροι, και ου δει εγκρατεστεροι. Ibid. c. iii. And as to the body, Διαφερουντας και κατα μεγεθος και κατα ισχυν ανδρας αν χαιρειν, αποτελεσαν. Ibid.

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ing women, marriage, and children.

convince us, had they barely mentioned the fact, without explaining its cause. But in describing the system of Lycurgus, they have not omitted his important regulations concerning the intercourse between the sexes, women, marriage, and children, whose welfare was, even before their birth, a concern to the republic. The generous and brave, it is said, produce the brave and good; but the physical qualities of children still more depend on the constitution of their parents. In other countries of Greece, the men were liberally formed by war, hunting, and the gymnastic exercises; but the women were universally condemned to drudge in sedentary and ignoble occupations, which enfeebled the mind and body. Their chief employment was to superintend, more frequently to perform, the meanest offices of domestic economy, and to prepare, by the labour of their hands, food and raiment for themselves and families. Their diet was coarse and sparing; they abstained from the use of wine; they were deprived of liberal education, and debarred from fashionable amusements. Women, thus degraded by servility, appeared incapable of giving good sons to the republic, which Lycurgus regarded as the principal duty of the Lacedæmonian females. By the institutions of Sparta, therefore, the working of wool, the labours of the loom and needle, and other mean mechanical arts, were generally committed to servile hands. The free-born women enjoyed and practised those liberal exercises and amusements, which were elsewhere

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considered as the peculiar privilege of men; they assisted at the public solemnities, mingled in general conversation, and dispensed that applause and reproach, which dispensed by them are always most effectual.[98] Hence they became not only the companions, but the judges of the other sex; and, except that their natural delicacy was not associated to the honours of war, they enjoyed the benefit, without feeling the restraint of the Spartan laws.

The restoration of the natural rights of women restored moderation and modesty in the intercourse between the sexes. Marriage, though enjoined as a duty, could only be contracted in the full vigour of age; and these simple institutions had a more salutary influence on the physical improvement of the Spartans, than either the doubtful expedient, which prevailed among them to the latest times, of adorning the women's apartments with the finest statues of gods and heroes, that, by frequently contemplating these graceful images, they might produce fairer offspring; or the unnatural and detestable cruelty of exposing delicate or deformed children, a practice strongly recommended by Lycurgus, and silently approved, or faintly blamed, by the greatest philosophers of antiquity.

[98] This, likewise, was the business of women in the heroic ages.

Αλλα μαλα αιναι
Αιδεομαι Τρωας και Τρωαδας ελκεσιπεπλους,
Αικε, κακος ὡς, νοσφιν αλιτσκοιμην πολεμοιο.

Il. l. vi. ver. 442.

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CHAP. III. Education.

Even in a moral view, the character of Spartan mothers must have been highly beneficial to their sons; since much of the happiness of life depends on the first impressions of our tender years. When boys were emancipated from the jurisdiction of women, they were not entrusted, as in other parts of Greece, to the mercenary tuition of slaves, who might degrade their sentiments, and corrupt their morals. The education of youth, as an office of the highest confidence, was committed to those who had enjoyed, or who were entitled to enjoy, the most splendid dignities of the republic; after the example of ancient times, when Phœnix educated Achilles, and when it was reasonably required that the master should himself possess the virtues with which he undertook to inspire his disciples. The Spartan youth were taught music and drawing: the former of which comprehended the science not only of sounds, but of number and quantity: they were taught to read and speak their own language with graceful propriety; to compose in prose and in verse; above all, to think, and in whatever they said, even during the flow of unguarded conversation, to accommodate the expression to the sentiment.[99] Their sedentary studies were relieved by the orchestric and gymnastic exercises, the early practice of which might qualify them for

[99] In the smart pithy sentences, or apothegms, for which the Spartans were famous, the thought is sometimes elegant, and sometimes ingenious; but their merit depends for the most part on the observance of the rule in the text. See Plut. Apoth.

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the martial labours of the field. For this most important business of their manhood, they were still further prepared, by being enured, even in their tender years, to a life of hardship and severity. They wore the same garment summer and winter; they walked bare-footed in all seasons; their diet was plain and frugal, and for the most part so sparing, that they seized every favourable opportunity to supply the defect. What they were unable to ravish by force, they acquired by fraud. When their theft (if theft can be practised where separate property is almost unknown) was discovered, they were severely punished; but if their dexterous deceit escaped observation, they were allowed to boast of their success, and met with due applause for their activity, vigilance, and caution; which indicated a character well fitted to excel in the useful stratagems of war.[100]

Peculiar discipline of the youth.

After attaining the ordinary branches of education, youth are frequently left the masters of their own actions. Of all practical errors, Lycurgus deemed this the most dangerous. His discernment perceived the value of that most important period of life, which intervenes between childhood and virility; and the whole force of his discipline was applied to its direction and improvement. Instead of being loosened from the usual ties of authority, the Spartans, at the age of adolescence, were subjected to a more rigorous restraint; and the most extraordinary

[100] Besides Xenophon and Plutarch, see, for the Spartan education, Plato in Protagor.

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expedients were employed to moderate the love of pleasure, to correct the insolence of inexperience, and to controul the headstrong impetuosity of other youthful passions. Their bodies were early familiarised to fatigue, hunger, and watching; their minds were early accustomed to difficulty and danger. The laborious exercise of the chase formed their principal amusement: at stated times, the magistrates took an account of their actions, and carefully examined their appearance. If the seeds of their vicious appetites had not been thoroughly eradicated by a life of habitual toil and temperance, they were subjected to corporal punishment, which it was their custom to endure with patient fortitude. The maxims of honour were instilled by precept, and enforced by example. The public tables, which were frequented by all ages, served as so many schools of wisdom and virtue, where, on ordinary occasions; but more particularly on days of festivity, the old related their ancient exploits, and boasted their past prowess; those in the vigour of life displayed the sentiments which their manly courage inspired; and the young expressed a modest confidence that, by stedfastly adhering to the precepts of Lycurgus, they might be enabled in due time to equal, perhaps surpass, the glory of both.

Their emulation.

But the desire of emulating the fame of their illustrious ancestors was not the most ardent principle that animated the minds of the rising generation. They were taught to vie with each other in every agreeable and useful accomplish-

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ment. As they were trained and disciplined in separate classes, according to their respective ages of childhood, adolescence, and virility[101], their characters were exactly ascertained and fully known: and the rewards and honours gradually bestowed on them, were apportioned to the various degrees of excellence which they had previously discovered. When they attained the verge of manhood, three youths of superior merit were named by the Ephori, that they might respectively choose, each an hundred of their companions, who should be entitled to the honourable distinction of serving in the cavalry. The reasons of preference and rejection were openly explained; and the youths who had been set aside, became, from that moment, the rivals and opponents both of the electors and of the elected. At home and abroad, in the assemblies for conversation and exercise, in the gymnastic and musical contests, in their military expeditions, as well as their martial amusements, the two parties displayed the utmost emulation and ardour, the one to regain the equality which they had lost, the other to maintain their ascendency. They seldom rencountered in the streets or walks, without discovering their animosity in mutual defiances, often in blows. But these quarrels were not dangerous, either to the quiet of the public, or to the persons of individuals,

[101] I have chosen these words to express the successive ages of the παις, μειρακιον, εφηβος. They continued πεμπωντες, till 46, which was reckoned by the Greeks and Romans the beginning of old age. Vid. Cic. de Senectute.

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because the combatants were obliged to separate (under the pain of punishment and disgrace) at the peaceful summons of every bye-stander; and the respected admonitions of age controlled, on such occasions, the youthful fermentation of turbulent passions.

The paternal authority in Sparta.

The reverence for aged wisdom, which formed the prevailing sentiment of the heroic times, was restored by the legislation of Lycurgus, and employed as a main pillar of his political edifice. The renovation of limited government, the equal partition of lands, and the abolition of wealth and luxury, had removed the artificial sources of half the miseries and disgrace of human kind. But Lycurgus considered his system as incomplete, until he had levelled not only the artificial, but many of the natural inequalities, in the condition of his fellow-citizens. The fears and infirmities of the old were compensated by honour and respect; the hopes and vigour of the young were balanced by obedience and restraint. The difference of years thus occasioned little disproportion of enjoyment; the happiness of every age depended on virtuous exertion; and as all adventitious and accidental distinctions were removed, men perceived the importance of personal merit, and of its reward, the public esteem, and eagerly grasped the advantages which glory confers; the only exclusive advantages which the laws of Lycurgus permitted them to enjoy. The paternal authority [102], which maintained the discipline, and pro-

[102] The "patria potestas."

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moted the grandeur of Rome, was firmly established at Sparta, where every father might exercise an unlimited power, over not only his own, but the children of others, who were all alike regarded as the common sons of the republic. This domestic superiority naturally prepared the way for civil pre-eminence: the elective dignities of the state were obtained only by men of experienced wisdom; and it required sixty years of laborious virtue to be entitled to a seat in the senate-house, the highest ambition of the Spartan chiefs. Such regulations, of which it is impossible to mistake the spirit, had a direct tendency to produce moderation and firmness in the public councils, to controul the too impetuous ardour of a warlike people, to allay the ferment of domestic faction, and to check the dangerous ambition of foreign conquest. The power of the magistrate was confounded with the authority of the parent; they mutually assisted and strengthened each other, and their united influence long upheld the unshaken fabric of the Spartan laws, which the old felt it their interest to maintain, and the young deemed it their glory to obey.

Coincidence of the institutions of Lycurgus with those of the heroic ages.

Such were the celebrated institutions of Lycurgus, which are eminently distinguished by the simplicity of their design, the exact adaptation of their parts, and the uniform consistence of the whole, from the political establishments of other countries, which are commonly the irregular and motley production of time and accident. Without a careful examination of the

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whole system, it is impossible to seize the spirit of particular laws. But if the whole be attentively considered, we shall perceive that they contain nothing so original or so singular as is generally believed. From the innumerable coincidences that have been remarked between the heroic and the Spartan discipline, there seems sufficient ground to conclude that the one was borrowed from the other; and if we accurately contemplate the genius of both, we may discern that they tended not (as has been often said) to stop and interrupt, but only to divert, the natural current of human propensities and passions. The desire of wealth and of power, of effeminate ease, of frivolous amusements, and of all the artificial distinctions and enjoyments of polished society, are only so many ramifications of the love of action and of pleasure; passions which it would be impossible to eradicate, without destroying the whole vigour of the mind. Yet these propensities, which it is often the vain boast of philosophy to subdue, policy may direct to new and more exalted objects. For the sordid occupations of interest, may be substituted the manly pursuits of honour; the love of virtuous praise may controul the desire of vicious indulgence; and the impressions of early institution, confirmed by example and habit, may render the great duties of life its habitual employment and highest pleasure.

Spirit of both.

Such a condition of society seems the utmost elevation and grandeur to which human nature can aspire. The Spartans attained, and long pre-

Fate of the Spartan institutions.

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served, this state of exaltation; but several circumstances and events, which the wisdom of Lycurgus[103] had foreseen, but which no human power could prevent, undermined the foundation of their greatness and felicity. Their military prowess gave them victory, slaves, and wealth; and though individuals could feel only the pride of virtue, and enjoy only the luxury of glory, the public imbibed the spirit of rapacity and the ambition of conquest. As in other countries the vices of individuals corrupt the community, in Laconia the vices of the public corrupted individuals. This unfortunate tendency was increased by the inequality of the cities originally subject to the Lacedæmonian laws. Sparta, the capital, contained nearly a fourth part of the inhabitants of the whole territory; the rest were divided among thirty, and afterwards eighteen, subordinate towns.[104] The superior numbers of the Spartans enlarged their sphere of competition, and increased their ardour of emulation. They soon surpassed their neighbours not only in valour and address, but in dignity and in power. All matters of importance were decided in the lesser assembly; the greater was seldom summoned; and the members of the former, instead of continuing the equals, became the masters, and at length the tyrants, of their Lacedæmonian brethren. The usurpation of

[103] Lycurgus had formed Sparta for defence, not for conquest. He expressly forbade them to pursue a flying enemy; he forbade them to engage frequently in war with the same people. Both injunctions were violated in the Messenian wars.

[104] Strabo, l. viii.

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power fomented their desire of wealth; several lots were accumulated by the same persons as early as the Persian war [105]; and the necessity of defending their possessions and their authority, against men who had arms in their hands and resentment in their hearts, rendered their government uncommonly rigid and severe. The slaves, the freemen [106], the tenants of the Laconian territory, and even such of the inhabitants of the capital, as, on account of their poverty, cowardice, or any other disgraceful circumstance, were debarred from the dignities of the republic [107], testified the keenest animosity against the stern pride of the Spartan magistrates, and, to use the lively but indelicate expression of Xenophon, would have "devoured them [108] raw." The Spartans, however, still maintained their superiority by force or by fraud, by seasonable compliance, or by prompt and judicious severity. By dividing the strength, they disarmed the fury of their enemies, and the flames of domestic discord were eclipsed in the splendour of foreign conquest, by which both the magistrates and the subjects were enriched and corrupted: yet, amidst civil discord and political degeneracy,

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[105] Demaratus told Xerxes that were but eight thousand Spartan lots (Herodot.); and about a century afterwards their number was reduced to one thousand. Arist. Polit.

[106] So I have translated the word νεοδαμωδεις, on the authority of Thucydides, l. v. δυναται το νεοδαμωδες ελευθερον ηδη ειναι. The resentment even of the freedmen proves the intolerable severity of the government.

[107] They were called υπομειονες, inferiors, in opposition of the ὁμοιοι, or peers.

[108] Xenophon Hellen. l. iii.

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they still preserved their religious and military institutions, as well as their invaluable plan of education; and their transactions, even in the latest ages of Greece, will furnish an ample and honourable commentary on the laws of Lycurgus.

Last transaction of Lycurgus.

Concerning this extraordinary man, only one farther[109] circumstance is recorded with any appearance of authenticity; a circumstance highly descriptive both of his own character, and of that of the age in which he lived. Having beheld the harmonious movement of the machine, which he had so skilfully contrived, he summoned an assembly, and declared, that now he had but one new regulation to propose, upon which, however, it was first necessary to consult the oracle of Delphi; that, meanwhile, his countrymen, who had seen the success of his labours, must engage that no alteration should take place before his return. The king, the senate, and the people, ratified the engagement by a solemn oath. Lycurgus undertook his journey; the oracle predicted the happiness which the Spartans should enjoy under his admirable laws; the response was transmitted to his country, whither Lycurgus himself determined never more to return, convinced that the duration of the government which he had established, would be better secured by the eternal sanctity of an oath, than by the temporary influence of his own personal interference.

[109] Some contradictory traditions concerning his death are preserved in Plut. in Lycurg. & Justin. l. iii.

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State of Greece after the Abolition of Royalty. — Description of Laconia and Messenia. — Causes of the War between those States. — Invasion of Messenia. — Distress of the Messenians. — The horrid Means by which they endeavour to remedy it. — They obtain Assistance from Argos and Arcadia. — Their Capital taken by the Spartans. — Issue of the first Messenian War. — State of Greece. — The Colony of Tarentum founded. — The second Messenian War. — Character and Exploits of Aristomenes. — The Distress of the Spartans. — They obtain Assistance from Athens. — The Poet Tyrtæus. — Subjugation of Messenia. — Future Fortunes of its Citizens. — Their Establishment in Sicily.

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State of Greece after the abolition of monarchy.

HAD the Greeks remained subject to kings, it is probable that they would have continued longer to exert their united valour against the surrounding Barbarians. The successful adventures of the Argonauts, the glorious, though wasting, expedition against Troy, would have animated the emulation and the hopes of succeeding candidates for fame; and the whole nation, being frequently employed in distant and general enterprises, would, through the habits of mutual intercourse, and the natural tendency of military subordination, have been gradually moulded into one powerful monarchy. This

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revolution would have given immediate tranquillity to Greece, but destroyed the prospect of its future grandeur. The honourable competitions of rival provinces must have ceased with their political independence; nor would the Greeks have enjoyed an opportunity of acquiring, by a long and severe apprenticeship in arms, that disciplined valour which eminently distinguished them above other nations of antiquity. In most countries, it has been observed, that, before the introduction of regular troops, the militia of the borders far excel those of the central provinces. Greece, even under its kings, was divided into so many independent states, that it might be regarded as consisting entirely of frontier. Under the republican form of government, it was still more subdivided; and motives of private ambition now co-operating with reasons of national animosity, wars became more frequent, and battles more bloody and more obstinate. It is little to be regretted, that scarcely any materials remain for describing the perpetual hostilities between the Thebans and the Athenians; between the latter and the Peloponnesians; between the Phocians and Thessalians; and, in general, between each community and its nearest neighbour. The long and spirited contest between the Lacedæmonians and Messenians, is the only war of that age which produced permanent effects. The relation of this obstinate struggle has happily come down to us, accompanied with such circumstances as paint the con-

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dition of the times, and answer the main ends of history.

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The territories of Laconia and Messenia occupied the southern division of the Peloponnesus. The shores of Laconia were washed by the eastern or the Ægæan; those of Messenia[1], by the western, or the Ionian, sea. The former country extended forty miles from east to west, and sixty from north to south. The ground, though roughened by mountains, like the rest of the Peloponnesus, abounded in rich and fertile vallies, equally adapted to the purposes of cultivation and pasture. The whole country was anciently called Hecatonpolis[2], from its hundred cities. They were reduced to the number of thirty[3] as early as the time of Lycurgus. The decay or destruction of Helos, Amyclæ, Pharis, and Geronthæ, and other less considerable towns, gradually increased the populousness of Sparta, the capital, situate near the centre of Laconia, and almost surrounded by the Eurotas. The other inland places of most note were Gerenea, Thurium, and Sellasia. The seaports were Prasiae, Cyphanta, Zarax; Limera, famous for its vines; and Gythium, whose capacious harbour was, in all ages, more than sufficient to contain the naval strength of [4]Sparta.

Description of Laconia,

[1] Isocrat. in Archidam. calls the country Messené; Pausanias, Messenia.

[2] Strabo, l. viii. p. 362. mentions this only as a hearsay; but it has been always repeated.

[3] Strabo says, "about thirty," and calls them πολίχνια, oppidula, little towns.

[4] Strabo, l. viii. p. 363, &c. and Pausan. in Lacon.

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In the time of Lycurgus, the freemen of full age, amounted to thirty-nine thousand.[5] Those of full age are generally reckoned the fourth part of the whole; so that the free inhabitants of Laconia may be computed at one hundred and fifty-six thousand; and the slaves, as will appear hereafter, probably exceeded four times that number.

and of Messenia.

Messenia was less extensive, but more fertile, than Laconia; and the former country, in ancient times, was proportionably more populous. Both kingdoms were principally supported by agriculture and pasturage, their subjects never having attained any high degree of improvement in arts, manufactures, or commerce. Messenia was, however, adorned by the seaports of Coroné, Pylus, Methonè, and Cyparyssus. The most considerable inland towns were Andania, the ancient capital; the strong fortress of Eira; the frontier town of Ampheia; and the celebrated Ithomé, near to the ruins of which was erected, by Epaminondas, the comparatively modern city of Messené.[6]

Spirit of government in both communities.

As the countries of Laconia and Messenia were both governed by kings of the family of Hercules, and both inhabited by subjects of the same Doric race, it might have been imagined that such powerful connections would have disposed them to continue in a state of mutual friendship; or, if the ties of blood could not

[5] Plut. in Lycur.

[6] Pausan. in Messen. & Strabo, l. viii. p. 360, &c.

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excite neighbouring states to a reciprocation of good offices, that they would at least have engaged them to maintain an inoffensive tranquillity. The different branches of the family of Hercules were induced by interest, as well as persuaded by affection, mutually to support each other. When the prerogative was invaded in any particular kingdom, it was natural for the neighbouring princes to defend the cause of royalty[7]; and we find that on several occasions, they had engaged to assist each other in repressing the factious turbulence of the nobles, and the seditious spirit of the people. But when the influence of the family of Hercules declined with the abolition of monarchy in most countries of Greece, the capital of each little principality, which always enjoyed a pre-eminence in the national assemblies, began to usurp an unlimited authority over the neighbouring cities, and to controul, by its municipal jurisdiction, the general resolves of the community. Sparta had in this manner extended her power over the smaller towns of Laconia. The walls of Helos, whose inhabitants had pertinaciously resisted this usurpation, were levelled with the ground, the citizens reduced to the most miserable slavery, and a law enacted by the Spartan council, which forbade, under severe penalties, the emancipation of the Helots, or the selling of them into foreign countries, where they might entertain the flattering hopes of regaining their lost liberty. The same tyrannical spirit which governed the

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[7] Isocrat. in Archidam.

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measures of the Spartans, had taken possession of their neighbours the Messenians, and had urged the inhabitants of the capital to invade, conquer, and enslave several of the smaller cities.

General causes of the war between them.

While such ambitious principles prevailed with both nations, it was scarcely to be imagined that the more powerful should not exert its utmost strength to obtain dominion, and the weaker, its utmost courage and activity to preserve independence. Besides this general cause of animosity, the rich fields of Messenia offered a tempting prize to the avarice of the Spartans; a circumstance continually alleged by the Messenians, as the principal motive which had induced their enemies to commence an unjust and unprovoked war. The Spartans, however, by no means admitted this reproach. It was natural, indeed, that such differences should arise between the subjects of rival states, as might furnish either party with a plausible pretence for taking arms. These differences it will be proper briefly to relate, after premising, that although the Greek historians mention *three* Messenian wars, the *third* had little resemblance, either in its object, or in its effect, to the first and second. These were the general struggles of a warlike people for preserving their hereditary freedom and renown, while the third, though dignified with the same appellation, was only an unsuccessful revolt of slaves from their masters.

Their mutual injuries.

On the confines of Messenia and Lacedæmon stood an ancient temple of Diana, which, being erected at the common expence, was open to the

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prayers and sacrifices of the two nations. Hither, according to annual custom, repaired a select band of Spartan virgins to solemnise the chaste rites of their favourite divinity. A company of Messenian youths arrived at the same time to perform their customary devotion, and to implore the protection of the warlike goddess. Inflamed by the beauty of the Spartan females, the Messenians equally disregarded the sanctity of the place, and the modest character of Diana, whose worship they came to celebrate. The licentious youths, after vainly attempting by the most ardent prayers and vows, to move the stern inflexibility of Spartan virtue, had recourse to brutal violence in order to consummate their fatal designs; fatal to themselves, to their country, and to the unhappy victims of their fury, who, unwilling to survive so intolerable a disgrace, perished miserably by their own hands. [8]

Euephnus the Lacedæmonian, defrauds the Messenian Polychares. Olymp. ix. 1. A. C. 774.

To this enormity on the part of the Messenians, succeeded another of a more private nature, on that of the Lacedæmonians. Polychares was a Messenian of noble birth, of great wealth, conspicuous for the virtues of public and private life, and renowned for his victories in the Olympic games. The property of Polychares, like that of the most opulent of his countrymen, chiefly consisted in numerous herds of cattle; part of which he intrusted to a Lacedæmonian, of the name of Euephnus, who undertook, for

[8] Pausan. in Messen. p. 222. The Messenians denied this whole transaction, and substituted a more improbable story in its stead. Pausan. ibid.

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a stipulated reward, to feed them on the rich meadows which he possessed on the Lacedæmonian coast. The avarice of Euephnus was not restrained by the sense of duty, the principles of honour, or the sacred ties of hospitality. Having sold the cattle to foreigners, who often came to purchase that article in Laconia, he travelled to the Messenian capital, and visiting his friend Polychares, lamented the loss of his property by the incursion of pirates.

Assassinates his son.

The frequency of such events would, probably, have concealed the fraud; but a slave, whom Euephnus sold along with the cattle, having escaped the vigilance of his new masters, arrived in time to undeceive the generous credulity of Polychares. The perfidious Lacedæmonian, seeing his contrivance thus unexpectedly disconcerted, endeavoured to deprecate the just resentment of his friend, by the most humiliating confession of his guilt, and by insisting on the temptation of gain, the frailty of nature[9], the sincerity of his repentance, and earnest desire of making immediate restitution. Unfortunately, indeed, he had not any considerable sum of money in his possession; but if Polychares would allow his son to accompany him to Lacedæmon, he would put into the hands of the youth the full price which he had received for his father's property. On this occasion it is easier to pity the misfortune, than excuse the weak-

[9] Εν γαρ τη ανθρωπινη φυσει, και αλλων ενοντων, αφ' οις βιαζομεθα αδικοι γινεσθαι, τα κερδη μεγιστην αναγκην εχει. PAUSAN.
Et l'interet enfin père de tous les crimes. HENRIADE.

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ness of the Messenian. The youth had no sooner set foot on the Lacedæmonian territory than the traitor Euephnus stabbed him to the heart. CHAP. IV.

The afflicted father, assembling his friends and followers, travelled to Sparta, and implored the just vengeance of the laws against the accumulated guilt of perfidy and murder. In vain he repeatedly addressed himself to the kings, to the Ephori, to the senate, and to the assembly. The money, the eloquence, the intrigues of Euephnus, and, above all, his character of Spartan, prevailed over the impotent solicitations of a Messenian stranger. Polychares, provoked by the cruel disregard of the Lacedæmonians to his just demands, determined to return home; but having lost his understanding through rage and despair, he assaulted and slew several Spartan citizens whom he met on the road; and after thus quenching his resentment against the guilty in the blood of the innocent, he was conducted by the assistance of his friends to his native country. Polychares takes vengeance on the Spartans.

He had not long returned to Andania, when ambassadors arrived from the Spartan senate, demanding the person of such an atrocious and open offender. The Messenians assembled to deliberate on this request; and Androcles and Antiochus, who were jointly invested with the regal power, having differed, as usually happened, in their opinions, each prince was supported by the strength of a numerous faction. The debate was decided by an expedient often adopted in such tumultuary assemblies: both parties had recourse The Spartan senate demands his person.

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to arms, and the sedition being fatal to Androcles, the opinion of Antiochus prevailed, who declared against delivering Polychares into the power of his enraged enemies. But Antiochus, though he denied the unreasonable demand of the Spartan ambassadors, dismissed them with a proposal, which left them no room to complain of injustice. He offered, in the name of the Messenian assembly, to refer all differences between the two nations to the respected council of the Amphictyons. This equitable proposal, which ill suited the ambitious designs of Sparta, was not honoured with an answer from that republic, who, desirous to acquire the rich fields of Messenia, prepared for taking arms; and, having completed her preparations, bound her citizens by oath never to desist from hostility till they had effected their purpose.[10]

The Messenians refuse to comply, but offer to refer the dispute to the Amphictyons.

Without an open declaration of war (for ambition had extinguished every sentiment of piety) they invaded the Messenian frontier, and attacked the small town of Ampheia, which, from its advantageous situation on a rock, seemed equally proper for infesting the enemy, and securing their own retreat.[11] The time chosen for the assault was the dead of night, when the unsuspecting inhabitants reposed in full confidence of their accustomed security. There was neither centinel

The Spartans surprise Ampheia. Olymp. ix. 2. A. C. 743.

[10] Strabo expresses this oath strongly, but oddly, Ὀμοσαντες μη πρoτερον επανηξειν οικαδε, πριν η Μεσσηνην αναλειν· η παντας αποθανειν. "Having sworn not to return home before that they either took "Messené, or that they all died."

[11] Ορμητηριον επιτηδειον. PAUSAN.

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at the gates, nor garrison within the place. The alarm was immediately followed by execution. Many Ampheians were assassinated in their beds; several fled to the altars of the gods, the sanctity of which proved a feeble protection against the Spartan cruelty; and a miserable remnant escaped to diffuse the melancholy tidings of their unexpected calamity.

Spirited resolutions of the Messenians;

On this important emergency, Euphaes, who had succeeded to the throne of his father Antiochus, summoned a general assembly of his countrymen to the plain of Stenyclara; where, after hearing the opinion of others concerning the critical situation of their affairs, he declared his own sentiments, which were full of honour and magnanimity: "That the final event of the war was not "to be conjectured by its unfortunate beginning; "the Messenians, though less enured to arms "than their warlike opponents, would acquire "both skill and courage in pursuing the measures "of a just defence, and the gods, protectors of "innocence, would make the struggles of virtuous "liberty prevail over the rude assaults of violence "and ambition." The discourse of Euphaes was received with shouts of applause; and the Messenians, by advice of their king, abandoned the open country, and settled in such of their towns as were best fortified by art or nature, leaving the remainder to the invasion of an enemy, with whose bravery and numbers their own weakness was yet unable to contend. But while they kept within their walls, they continued to exercise themselves in arms, and to acquire such vigour and discipline

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as might enable them to oppose the Spartans in the field. Four years elapsed from the taking of Ampheia before they ventured to embrace this dangerous measure. During all that time, the Spartans made annual incursions into their country, destroying their harvests, and carrying into captivity such straggling parties as they happened to surprise. They took care, however, not to demolish the houses, to cut down the wood, or otherwise to disfigure or desolate a country which they already regarded as their own.

who determine to risk a battle; Olymp. x. 1. A. C. 740.

The Messenians, on the other hand, as their courage continued to increase, were not contented with defending their own walls, but detached, in small parties, the boldest of their warriors to ravage the sea-coast of Laconia. Encouraged by the success of these predatory expeditions, Euphaes determined to take the field with the flower of the Messenian nation. The army of freemen was attended by an innumerable crowd of slaves, carrying wood and other materials necessary for encampment. Thus prepared, they put themselves in motion, and, before they reached the frontier, were seen by the Spartan garrison of Ampheia, who immediately sounded the alarm of an approaching enemy. The Spartans flew to arms with more than their wonted alacrity, delighted with the opportunity for which they had so long wished in vain, of deciding, at one blow, the event of a tedious war. The hostile armies approached with a celerity proportioned to the fury of their

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resentment, and arrived, with high expectations, at the intermediate plain which overspread the confines of the two kingdoms. But there, the martial ardour of the troops received a check, which had not been forseen by their commanders. The rivulet, intersecting the plain, was swelled by the rains into a torrent. This circumstance prevented a general engagement. The cavalry alone (amounting on either side to about five hundred horse) passed near the head of the ravine, and contended in an indecisive skirmish; while the fury of the infantry evaporated in empty boasts and unavailing insults. Night insensibly came on, during which the Messenians fortified their camp with so much skill, that the enemy, rather than venture to storm it, preferred to return home, after an expedition, which, considering their superiority in numbers, appeared no less inglorious than ineffectual.

which proves indecisive.

The pusillanimous behaviour of the Spartan army deserved not the approbation of the senate. The severe fathers of the republic upbraided the degeneracy of the youth, who no longer paid regard to the sanctity of the oath which they had taken, never to lay down their arms until they had completely subdued the Messenians. The spirit of the senate was soon diffused through the community; and it was determined, in the general assembly of the nation, to prepare for carrying on a more fierce war than the enemy had yet experienced. At the approach of autumn, the season always preferred for the predatory expeditions of those early times, all

Spartans prepare for carrying on the war with vigour.

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the Spartans of military age, as well as the inhabitants of the subordinate towns of Laconia, known by the general name of Lacedæmonians, were ready to take the field. After leaving a sufficient body of troops for the internal safety of the country, the number that might be spared abroad probably amounted to about twenty thousand men. This powerful army was still farther increased by the confluence of strangers, particularly the Assinians and Dryopians, who fled from the cruel tyranny of Argos, a republic no less blameable than Sparta, for oppressive severity towards her weaker neighbours. Besides this reinforcement, the Spartans hired a considerable body of archers from Crete, to oppose the horse and light infantry of the Messenians. The management of the expedition was entrusted to the Spartan Kings Theopompus and Polydorus; the former of whom commanded the right, and the latter the left wing, while the central division was committed to the discretion and valour of Euryleon, who, though born in Sparta, descended from the royal line of Theban Cadmus.

Number of their forces.

Ancient writers have neglected to mention the scene of this second engagement, which Pausanias has, with more diffusiveness than accuracy, described, in his historical journey through Messenia; but it is reasonable to conjecture, from this omission, that both the first and second battles happened near the same place, on the extensive plain which connects the frontiers of the two kingdoms.

Second engagement. Olymp. x. 2. A. C. 739.

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The Messenians were inferior, both in numbers and in discipline, but ardent in the cause of every thing most dear to them. Euphaes headed their left wing, which opposed the division of Theopompus; Pytharatus led the right; and Cleonnis commanded the centre. Before the signal was given for charge, the commanders addressed their respective troops. Theopompus, with Laconic brevity, "reminded the Spartans "of their oath, and of the glory which their ancestors had acquired by subduing the territories of their neighbours." Euphaes, at greater length, animated his soldiers to victory, by describing the fatal consequences of a defeat. "Their lands and fortunes were not the only "objects of contention: they had already experienced the Spartan cruelty in the unhappy "fate of Ampheia, where all the men of a military age had been put to the sword; the women, as well as the children, with their aged "parents, subjected to an ignominious servitude; their temples burnt or plundered; the "city levelled with the ground, and the country "desolated. The calamities hitherto confined to "that little district, would be diffused over the "whole of their beautiful territory, unless the "active bravery of Messenia should now, by a "noble effort of patriotism, overcome the numbers and discipline of Sparta." Encouraged by the ardour of their prince, the Messenians rather ran than marched to the battle. As they approached the enemy, they threatened them with their eyes and gestures, reproaching them

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with an insatiable avidity for wealth and power, an unnatural disregard to the ties of blood, an impious indifference towards common paternal gods, and particularly for the revered name of Hercules, the acknowledged founder and patron of both kingdoms. From words of reproach they made an easy transition to deeds of violence. Many quitted their ranks, and assailed the embattled phalanx of the Spartans. The wounded spent the last exertions [12] of their strength in signal acts of vengeance, or employed their last breath in conjuring their companions to imitate the example of their bravery; and to maintain, by an honourable death, the safety and renown of their country. To the generous ardour of the Messenians, Sparta opposed the assured intrepidity of disciplined valour. Her citizens, inured to the use of arms, closed their ranks, and remained firm in their respective posts. Where the enemy in any part gave way, they followed them with an undisturbed progress; and endeavoured, by the continuance of regular exertion, to overcome the desultory efforts of rage, fury, and despair.[13]

Fierceness and obstinacy of the combatants.

Such were the principal differences in the sentiments and conduct of two armies, both of

[12] Agreeably to the melancholy firmness of the advice afterwards given by Tyrtæus to the Spartans,

Και τις αποθνησκων υσατ' ακοντισατο.

TYRTÆUS, edit. Glasg. p. 4. ver. 5.

[13] The mode of fighting in that age is forcibly described by Tyrtæus, p. 7. edit. Glasg. Αλλα τις εν διαβας μενετο προσι αμφοτερωσι, &c. to the end of the poem.

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which were alike animated by the love of glory and the desire of vengeance; passions which they carried to such a length, that there was no example, on either side, of a soldier who deigned to ask quarter, or who attempted to soothe, by the promise of a large ransom, the unrelenting cruelty of the victors. Emulation and avarice conspired in despoiling the bodies of the slain. Amidst this barbarous employment, which custom only rendered honourable, many met with an untimely fate; for, while they stripped the dead with the rashness of blind avidity, they often exposed their own persons to the darts and swords of their enemies; and sometimes the dying, by a fortunate wound, soothed the agonies of the present moment, and retaliated their past sufferings on their unguarded despoilers.

The Spartan and Messenian kings prepare to engage in single combat:

The kings, who had hitherto been satisfied with leading their troops to action, and sharing the common danger, longed, as the battle began to warm, to signalise their valour in single combat. With this design, Theopompus, listening only to his courage, first marched towards Euphaes, who, seeing him approach, cried out to his companions, "Does not Theopompus well "imitate the bloody-minded Polynices [14], who, "at the head of an army of strangers, levied war "against his native country, and, with his own "hand, slew a brother, by whom, at the same "instant, he himself was slain? In like manner "does Theopompus, with unnatural hatred, per-

[14] See above, p. 16.

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"secute his kinsmen of the race of Hercules; "but I trust he shall meet the punishment due "to his impiety." At sight of this interesting spectacle, the troops were inspired with new ardour, and the battle raged with redoubled fury. The chosen bands, who respectively watched the safety of the contending princes, became insensible to personal danger, and only solicitous to preserve the sacred persons of their kings. The strength of Sparta, at length, began to yield to the activity of her rivals. The troops of Theopompus were broken and thrown into disorder; and the reluctant prince was himself compelled to retire. At the same time the right wing of the Messenians, having lost their leader Pytharatus, yielded to the exertions of Polydorus and his Spartans: but neither this general, nor King Euphaes thought proper to pursue the flying enemy. It seemed more expedient to strengthen, with their victorious troops, the central divisions of their respective armies, which still continued to fight with obstinate valour, and doubtful success. Night at length put an end to the engagement, which had proved hard and humiliating to both parties; for next morning neither offered to renew the battle, neither ventured to erect a trophy of victory; while both craved a suspension of arms, for the purpose of interring the dead; a demand generally construed as an acknowledgment of defeat.

Prevented by the ardour of their troops.

Extraordinary issue of the battle.

Its remote consequences.

Although the immediate effects of the battle were alike destructive to the Spartans and to the Messenians, its remote consequences were pecu-

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liarly ruinous to the latter. They were less rich and less numerous than their opponents; their army could not be recruited with the same facility; many of their slaves were bribed into the enemy's service; and a pestilential distemper, concurring with other misfortunes, reduced them to the last extremity of distress. The Spartans, meanwhile, carried on their annual incursions with more than usual cruelty, involving the husbandmen, with his labours, in undistinguished ruin, and destroying by fire and sword, the wretched inhabitants of the unfortified cities. The miserable ravages to which these cities were continually exposed, obliged the Messenians to abandon them and to seek refuge among the almost inaccessible mountains of Ithomé; a place which, though situate near the frontiers of Laconia, afforded them the securest retreat amidst their present calamities, being strongly fortified by nature, and surrounded by a wall, which bid defiance to the battering engines known in that early age.

The Messenians shut themselves up in the fortress Ithomé.

The Messenians, thus defended against external assaults, were still exposed to the danger of perishing by famine. The apprehension of this new calamity gave additional poignancy to the feelings of their unhappy situation, and increased the horrors of the pestilence which raged more fiercely than ever among men cooped up within a narrow fortress. Under the pressure of present, and the dread of future evil, their minds were favourably disposed for admitting the terrors of superstition. A messenger was

Their sufferings there.

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sent to Delphi to enquire by what sacrifice they might appease the resentment of the angry gods. On his return to Ithomé, he declared the stern answer of the god, which demanded the innocent blood of a virgin of the royal race. The Messenians prepared in full assembly to obey the horrid mandate. The lots were cast, and the daughter of Lyciscus was declared worthy of atoning, by her blood, for the sins of the prince and people; but the father, who was only a distant branch of the royal family, allowed his paternal affection to prevail over the dictates of both his patriotism and his piety. By his advice, Ephebolus, a diviner, opposed the sacrifice, asserting that the pretended princess was not what she appeared, but a supposititious child, whom the artifice of the wife of Lyciscus had adopted, to conceal her barrenness. While the remonstrances of the diviner engaged the attention of the assembly, Lyciscus privately withdrew his daughter; and, escaping unobserved through the gates of Ithomé, sought protection, against the cruelty of fortune and of his friends, among the inveterate enemies of his country.

Prepare to sacrifice a virgin of the royal blood,

who is withdrawn by her father.

He had already made considerable progress in his journey towards Sparta, when the discovery of his departure threw the Messenians into great consternation; nor is it easy to determine what might have been the effect of their superstitious terrors, had not Aristodemus, another branch of the Herculean stock, and not more distinguished by birth than merit, voluntarily offered to devote his own child for the public safety. But this

Aristodemus devotes his own daughter.

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sacrifice was likewise opposed by a youth, who, passionately in love with the intended victim, cried out, that she was his betrothed wife, and that it belonged to her destined husband, not to her inhuman father, to dispose of her life and fortune. When his noisy clamours were little regarded by the assembly, he had the effrontery to assert, that the daughter of Aristodemus could not answer the condition required by the oracle; that even before the nuptial rites had been celebrated, she had pitied the violence of his passion, and that now she carried in her womb the fruit of their unhappy loves. Aristodemus, hearing this declaration, was seized with rage and indignation at the unmerited disgrace thrown on his family. "It then appeared," says an ancient author [16], "with what ease destiny tarnishes the "feeble virtues of men, as the slime of a river "does the shining ornaments which cover its "humid bed." The angry father plunged his dagger into the breast of his unfortunate daughter, and, with horrid barbarity, opening her womb in the presence of the amazed assembly, demanded justice on the infamous impostor who had traduced her virtue. The Messenians were still farther irritated against the youth, in consequence of the opinion of Ephebolus, who declared that another victim must be sought to appease the anger of the gods, because Aristodemus had sacrificed his daughter, not in obe-

Her lover opposes this design.

She is slain by her father.

[16] Pausanias, p. 232. This might satisfy the superstition of antiquity, but it will appear, in modern times, a poor excuse for such a shocking barbarity.

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dience to the oracle, but to gratify the impetuous passions of his own ungovernable soul. The rage of the assembly would have speedily sent the lover to attend the shade of his mistress; but fortunately he was beloved and pitied by king Euphaes, whose authority controuled, on this occasion, the audacious insolence of a priest, and checked the wild fury of the populace. The king asserted that Apollo had no reason to complain of their disobedience: the god demanded the blood of a virgin; a virgin had been slain; but neither did the Pythia determine, nor belonged it to them to enquire, by whose hand, or from what motive, the victim should be put to death.

Obstinate defence of the Messenians,

The oracle, thus favourably interpreted by the wisdom of the prince, not only allayed the frantic rage, but restored the fainting hopes, of the people. They determined to defend their capital to the last extremity; and this generous resolution, which they maintained inviolate during the course of several years, was justified by obstinate exertions of valour.

who procure assistance from Argos and Arcadia.

The spirited and persevering efforts of the Messenians, as well as the proud tyranny of Sparta, tended to procure to the weaker state several useful alliances among the neighbouring republics. Of all the communities inhabiting the Peloponnesus, the Corinthians alone, as a maritime and commercial people, entertained little jealousy of the Spartans; while the Argives and Arcadians, from proximity of situation, as well as interference of interest and ambition,

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held the disciples of Lycurgus in peculiar detestation. By the assistance of these powerful allies, the Messenians gained considerable advantage in two general engagements; in the former of which their king Euphaes, betrayed by the ardour of success into an unequal combat, was overpowered by numbers, and slain in the action. The valour of Aristodemus was called by the voice of the people to fill the vacant throne; and his conduct in war justified the high opinion entertained of him by his countrymen. For five years he baffled the aspiring hopes of the Spartans; defeated them in several desultory rencounters; and, in a pitched battle, fought near the walls of Ithomé, overcame the principal strength of their republic, assisted by that of the Corinthians.

Their transient success.

This victory, though obtained by stratagem rather than by superiority of courage or discipline, threw the Spartan senate into the greatest perplexity, and deprived them of the expectation of putting a speedy, or even a fortunate end to the war. In their distress they had recourse to the same oracle which had relieved the affliction of the Messenians. As the policy of the god seldom sent away in ill humour the votaries of his shrine, the destruction of Ithomé was announced with prophetic obscurity. The Spartans, with revived hopes, again took the field; and their new ardour was successful in several skirmishes with the Messenians, who, harassed by an open, were still more fatally oppressed by a secret foe. The people were again seized with

Ithomé at length surrenders. Olymp. xiv. 1. A. C. 724.

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superstitious terrors. Dreams, visions, and other prodigies, confirmed the melancholy prediction of Apollo. The impatient temper of Aristodemus made him withdraw, by a voluntary death, from the evils which threatened his country. The other leaders of greatest renown had perished in the field. Ithomé, deprived of its principal support, and invested more closely than before, was compelled, after a siege of five months, to submit to the slow but irresistible impressions of famine. Such of its inhabitants as were entitled to the benefit of hospitality in Sicyon, Argos, or Arcadia, travelled with all possible expedition into those countries. The sacred families, who were attached to the ministry of Ceres, sought a secure refuge among the venerable priests of Eleusis, in Attica. The greater part of the people dispersed themselves through the interior towns and villages, endeavouring, in the obscurity of their ancient habitations, to elude the industrious search of an unrelenting enemy.[16]

Consequences of the first Messenian war.

The Lacedæmonians having thus obtained possession of the Messenian capital, displayed signal gratitude to their gods, fidelity to their allies, and cruelty to their enemies. Ithomé was demolished to the foundation. Of its spoils, three tripods were consecrated to Amyclean Apollo. The first was adorned with the image of Venus, the second with that of Diana, and the third with the figures of Ceres and Proserpine. To the As-

[16] Pausan. Messen. & Strabo, l. viii.

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sinians, who had assisted them with peculiar alacrity in the war, the Spartans gave that beautiful portion of the Messenian coast, which assumed, and long retained, the name of its new inhabitants. They rewarded the good intentions of the Messenian Androcles, who, at the commencement of the war, had discovered his partiality for Sparta, by bestowing on his descendants the fertile district Hyamia. The rest of the Messenian nation were treated with all the rigour of Spartan policy. They were obliged to take an oath of allegiance to their proud victors, to present them every year with half the produce of their soil, and, under pain of the severest punishment, to appear in mourning habits at the funerals of the Spartan kings and magistrates.[17]

State of Greece at that time.

After the close of the first Messenian war, Greece appears, for several years, to have enjoyed an unusual degree of tranquillity. Peace promoted population; and the inhabitants of Peloponnesus continued to diffuse their numerous colonies over the islands of Sicily and Corcyra, as well as over the southern division of Italy, afterwards known by the name of Magna Græcia.[18] In this delicious country two considerable esta-

[17] Pausan. ibid.

[18] This name, as will be proved hereafter, denoted the Greek settlements, both in Italy and Sicily. The colonies there became, in progress of time, perhaps more considerable than the mother-country. Their proceedings will be fully related in the following work; but not until their transactions enter into the general system of Grecian politics.

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blishments were formed about the same time, the one at Rhegium, the other at Tarentum. Rhegium, situate on the southern extremity of the continent, soon acquired the ascendant over the neighbouring cities: and Tarentum having become the most powerful community on the eastern coast, had the honour of giving name to the spacious bay, which penetrates so deeply into Italy, that it almost unites the Tuscan and the Ionian seas.

The particular causes which occasioned, or the various consequences which attended, those several migrations, are not related in ancient history; the Lacedæmonian establishment at Tarentum was alone marked by such circumstances as have merited, on account of their singularity, to be handed down to succeeding ages.

The Lacedæmonians found Tarentum in Italy.

During the second expedition[19] of the Spartans against Messenia, the army, consisting of the greater part of the citizens who had attained the military age, bound themselves by oath not to return home till they had subdued their enemies. This engagement detained them several years in the field, during which period, Sparta, inhabited only by women, children, and helpless old men, produced no succeeding generation to support the future glories of the republic. Sensible of this inconvenience, which, in a warlike and ambitious state, surrounded by warlike and ambi-

[19] They had taken the same oath in the first expedition: but it appears from Pausanias that they did not observe it. The senators upbraided the youth with cowardice and contempt of their oath, δειλιαν και το ορκιδ υπεροψιαν. PAUSAN. p. 228.

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tious rivals, might have been productive of the most dangerous consequences, the senate recalled such young men as, having left their country before they had attained the military age, were not under any obligation to keep the field; and enjoined them to associate promiscuously with the married women, that the city might thus be preserved from decay and desolation. The children born of these useful, though irregular connections, were distinguished by the name of Partheniæ; probably denoting the condition of their mothers.[20] They had no certain father; nor were they entitled, though citizens of Sparta, to any private inheritance. These circumstances kept them a distinct body, the members of which were attached by the strictest friendship to each other, and hostile to the rest of the community.

Conspiracy of the Partheniæ and Helots.

This dangerous disposition was still farther increased by the imprudent behaviour of the Spartans, who, on their return from the conquest of Messenia, treated the Partheniæ with scorn and contumely. The young men could endure poverty and misfortune, but could not brook disgrace. Their unhappy situation, and the impatience with which they submitted to it, naturally connected them with the Helots, those miserable slaves whose just indignation ever prompted them to revolt from the cruel tyranny of their masters. A conspiracy was formed; the

[20] Παρθενιας. Filius natus ex ea, quæ quum duceretur, virgo non erat. Conf. ARISTOT. Polit. l. v. c. 7. et Epigram. apud Polluc.

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day, place, and signal were determined, upon which the Partheniæ and Helots, armed with concealed daggers, and with the most hostile fury, should retaliate, in the public assembly, their past sufferings and insults on the unsuspecting superiority of the proud lords of Sparta. The time approached, and the design was ripe for execution, when the president of the assembly ordered the cryer to proclaim, That none present should throw up his cap (for that had been the signal appointed by the conspirators); and thus clearly intimated that the plot had been discovered, and that the Spartans were prepared to meet and to overcome the dangerous treachery of their dependants. We are not informed of the punishment inflicted on the Helots, or whether, as the conspiracy had been laid open by one of their number, the merit of an individual was allowed to atone for the guilt of the class. The Partheniæ, however, were treated with a remarkable degree of lenity, suggested probably by the fears, rather than by the humanity of Sparta.[21] They were not only allowed to escape unpunished from their native country, but furnished with every thing necessary for undertaking a successful expedition against the neighbouring coasts; and thus enabled to establish themselves, under their leader Phalantus, in the delightful recesses of the Tarentine gulph.[22]

[21] Ephor. apud Strab. l. vi. [22] Pausan. Phoc.

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The Messenians prepare to revolt. Olymp. xxiii. 4. A. C. 685.

The Spartans, when delivered from the danger of this formidable conspiracy, enjoyed, above thirty years, domestic as well as public peace, until again disturbed by the revolt of the Messenians. The dishonourable conditions imposed on that people; the toilsome labours to which most of them were necessarily condemned, in order to produce the expected tribute; the natural fertility of the soil, augmented by industry, and augmenting in its turn the populousness of the country; all these causes conspired to sharpen their resentment, to embitter their hostility, and to determine them at every hazard to expose their fortune to the decision of the sword. The negligence of Sparta favoured the progress of rebellion. While she degraded the Messenians by the most humiliating marks of servitude, she allowed them, however, to rebuild their cities, to assemble in the public places, and to communicate to each other their mutual grievances and complaints. To reward the services of Androcles, the Messenian king, she had bestowed on his family the rich province of Hyamia; but the descendants of that prince, preferring the duties of patriotism to the dictates of gratitude, countenanced and encouraged the warlike dispositions of his countrymen. The young men of Andania longed to take up arms. They were headed by Aristomenes, a youth descended from the ancient line of Messenian kings, adorned with the most extraordinary qualities of mind and body, and whose exploits, if, instead of being sung by Rhianus,

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and related by Pausanias, they had been described by Xenophon, or celebrated by Homer, would place him in the first rank of Grecian heroes.

Obtain assistance from the Argives and Arcadians.

In entering upon this memorable war, the Messenians consulted the dictates of prudence, at the same time that they obeyed the calls of animosity and ambition. Before discovering their intention to take arms, they dispatched messengers to the Arcadians and Argives, intimating their inclination to throw off the yoke of Sparta, provided they could depend on the hearty assistance of their ancient allies. The Argives and Arcadians were naturally enemies to their warlike and ambitious neighbours; and at this particular juncture, the enmity of the former towards Sparta, was, by recent injuries, kindled into resentment. Both nations confirmed, by the most flattering promises, the resolution of the Messenians, who, with uncommon unanimity and concert, sought deliverance from the oppressive severity of their tyrants.

The battle of Derae.

The first engagement was fought at Derae, a village of Messenia. The soldiers, on both sides, behaved with equal bravery; the victory was doubtful; but Aristomenes, the Messenian, acquired unrivalled glory and renown. On the field of battle he was saluted King by the admiring gratitude of his countrymen. He declined, however, the dangerous honours of royalty, declaring himself satisfied with the appellation of General, which, in that age, implied a superiority in martial exercises, as well as in the knowledge of war,

Bravery and moderation of Aristomenes.

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and in the experience of command. The Messenian excelled in all these, and possessed, besides, a degree of military enthusiasm, which, as it was employed to retrieve the desperate affairs of his country, deserves to be for ever remembered and admired. Sensible how much depended on the auspicious beginning of the war, he immediately marched to Sparta; entered the city, which was neither walled nor lighted, during night; and suspended in the temple of Minerva a buckler, inscribed with his name, as a monument of his success against the enemy, and an offering to procure the good-will of that warlike goddess.

The singular exploits of Panormus and Gonippus.

The hardiness of this exploit was rivalled by the singular intrepidity of his companions Panormus and Gonippus. While the Lacedæmonians celebrated in their camp the festival of their heroes Castor and Pollux, the two youths of Andania, mounted on fiery steeds, with lances in their hands, and a purple mantle flowing over their white vestments, presented themselves in the midst of the joyous assembly. The superstitious crowd, dissolved in mirth and wine, imagined that their heavenly protectors had appeared in a human form, in order to grace the festival established in their honour.[23] As they approached unarmed, to pay their obeisance to the divine brothers of Helen, the young Messenians couched

[23] Pausanias, p. 266. However surprising this credulity may appear in the present age, it is attested by the most unquestionable evidence. Striking instances of it will occur in the later periods of the Greek history, in which the appearance of gods and heroes is as familiar an object as that of popish saints in the Spanish History of Mariana.

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their spears, attacked the multitude with irresistible fury, slew them with their weapons, or trod them down with their horses, and, before the assembly recovered from its surprise and consternation, set out in triumph on their return to Andania.

The Spartans alarmed, have recourse to the oracle. Olymp. xxiv. 2. A. C. 623.

These exploits, and others of a similar kind, which are not particularly recorded, were sufficient to alarm the fears of the Spartans, and to make them seek the advice of Apollo. The oracle, when consulted by what means they might change the success of the war, ordered them to demand a general from Athens; a response highly mortifying to the high Spartan spirit, as their own kings, descended from Hercules, were the constitutional commanders of their armies. In compliance, however, with the mandate of the god, the haughtiness of Sparta was obliged to make a request which the jealousy of Athens durst not venture to refuse.

The Athenians send them Tyrtæus, the poet.

The Athenians, when informed of the oracle, immediately dispatched to Sparta, Tyrtæus, a man who, like every Athenian citizen, had indeed borne arms, but who had never been distinguished by any rank in the army. He was chiefly known to his fellow-citizens as a poet; a character in which he has been justly admired by succeeding ages.[24] Among the Spartans, how-

[24] Insignis Homerus,
Tyrtæusque mares animos in martia bella,
Versibus exacuit. HOR.

Three poems of Tyrtæus, containing the praise of valour, are preserved in Stobæus; a fourth, on the same subject, in the only oration now remaining of Lycurgus the Athenian orator, the friend and rival of Demosthenes. A few detached couplets may also be read in Strabo and Pausanias.

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ever, he was regarded as the sacred messenger of the divinity; and his verses were supposed to convey the instructions and sentiments inspired by his heavenly protector.

Success of the Messenians under their heroic Aristomenes.

The heroic valour of Aristomenes long continued to prevail against the force of the oracle, as well as against all the other enemies of Messenia. He defeated the Spartans in three successive engagements, the circumstances of which are so similar, that they have frequently been confounded with each other. They were all fought in the plain of Stenyclara, and the most remarkable at a place called the Boar's Monument, from a tradition that Hercules had anciently sacrificed there an animal of that species. The Messenians were reinforced by the assistance of their allies of Elis and Sicyon, as well as of Argos and Arcadia. The Spartans were followed by the Corinthians, their ancient confederates, and by the citizens of Leprea, who chose to seek the protection of Sparta, rather than submit to the government of Elis. The combined army was commanded by Anaxander the Spartan King, whose influence, however, was rivalled by the authority of Hecatæus the diviner, and of Tyrtæus the poet. The Messenians had not a poet worthy of being opposed to Tyrtæus; but the predictions of their diviner Theocles were able, on some occasions, to promote or to restrain the ardour of Aristomenes himself.

The success of the engagement was chiefly owing to the spirited exertion of the Messenian general. At the head of a small band of chosen

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companions, he charged the principal division of the Spartan army, commanded by the King in person. The resistance was obstinate, and lasted for several hours. When the Spartans began to give way, Aristomenes ordered a new body of troops to complete his success, to rout and pursue the enemy. He, with his little but determined band, attacked a second division of the Lacedæmonians, which still continued firm in its post. Having compelled this also to retreat, he, with amazing rapidity, turned the valour of his troops against a third, and then against a fourth brigade[25], both of which giving ground, the whole army was put to flight, and pursued with great slaughter. The merit of these achievements was, on the return of Aristomenes, celebrated with great pomp at Andania. The men received their favourite hero with joyous acclamations; and the women, strowing his way with flowers, sung in his praise a stanza that has reached modern times, expressing, with elegant simplicity, the glorious victory obtained over the Lacedæmonians.

The tribute of just applause paid to the virtues of Aristomenes inspired him with a generous ambition to deserve the sincerest gratitude of his countrymen. With unremitting activity he continued, with his little band of faithful adherents,

[25] Pausanias acknowledges that the exploits of Aristomenes, in this engagement, almost exceed belief. Pausan. Messen. There is a remarkable coincidence in the character and achievements, as well as in the situation, of Aristomenes, and those of the celebrated Scottish patriot Wallace. Vid. Buchan. Hist. Scot. l. viii. passim.

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to over-run the hostile territory, to destroy the defenceless villages, and to carry the inhabitants into servitude. The towns of Pharæ, Carya, and Egila, successively experienced the fatal effects of his ravages. In the first, he found a considerable booty, in money and commodities; in the second, he found a booty still more precious, the daughters of the principal inhabitants dancing in the chorus of Diana, whom he honourably protected against the licentious violence of his followers, and restored, uninjured, for the ransom offered by their parents. In the assault of Egila, Aristomenes met with an unexpected check from the enthusiasm of the Spartan matrons, who were offering sacrifice to Ceres in a neighbouring temple, long held in peculiar veneration. As soon as they perceived the approach of the enemy, the women, who, according to the institutions of Lycurgus, had been trained to all the manly exercises of the other sex, issued forth from the temple, and assailing the Messenians with knives, hatchets, burning torches, and the other instruments of sacrifice, threw them into disorder, wounded several of the soldiers, and seized the person of their commander. Next day, however, Aristomenes was delivered from captivity, through the good offices of Archidamea, priestess of Ceres, whose susceptible heart had long admired and loved the merit and renown of the brave Messenian.

The Spartans animated by Tyrtæus.

The amazing success of the Messenians, which, in the course of three years, had been interrupted only by this inconsiderable incident,

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disposed the Spartan kings to abandon the war, and to allow their enemies to enjoy the honour and advantages which they had so bravely earned. This resolution was approved by the senate and assembly. The allies of Sparta readily adopted the same opinion. Tyrtæus alone opposed the disgraceful measure, with all the force of his authority. The sacred character of the bard, with the divine influence of his poetry, prevailed; and the Spartans again entered Messenia with an army, as numerous and powerful as any that they had before collected. But at sight of the Messenian troops, headed by Aristomenes, they were thrown into new consternation. The dreaded prowess of their heroic antagonist, which they had so often and so fatally experienced, continually presented itself to their minds; and the inspired arts of Tyrtæus were again necessary to resist the increasing panic. A second time he revived their drooping courage, while attesting the glory of ancient warriors, he expatiated on the magnanimity of despising fortune, the praise and honours of valour, the joys and rewards of victory.[26] These sentiments, dictated by the true spirit of heroism, fired their minds with martial ardour. Disregarding the sweets of life, they longed for an honourable death. One consideration only (such was the superstition of ancient times) damped the generous warmth that animated their souls. In an engagement, which there was every reason to believe would be fought with the most

[26] Tyrtæus, p. 2 and 3. edit. Glasg.

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obstinate valour on both sides, what crowds of warriors must fall, whose bodies, heaped together in horrid confusion, could not be recognized by their friends, or obtain, with due solemnity, the sacred rites of funeral! This melancholy thought, which chilled the boldest heart with religious horror, might have formed an insurmountable obstacle to their success, had not their terrors been removed by the prudent missionary of Apollo. By the advice of Tyrtæus, each soldier tied a token, inscribed with his name and designation, round his right arm, by means of which his body, however disfigured[27], might be known to his friends and kindred. Thus fortified against the only illusion that could alarm the minds of men who preferred death to a defeat, they rushed forward to attack their dreaded, and hitherto victorious, foes.

The battle of the Trenches.

The Messenian general had drawn up his forces at a place called the Great Ditch, from which this engagement has been called the battle of the Trenches.[28] The national strength was reinforced by a considerable body of Arcadian troops, commanded by their King Aristocrates, to whose treachery, as much as to their own valour, the Spartans were indebted for the victory.

Treachery of Aristocrates, leader of the Arcadians.

The Spartans, though possessed of little private wealth, had a considerable public treasure, with which they early began to bribe those whom they despaired to conquer. With this, perhaps,

[27] Confusa corporum lineamenta. JUSTIN.

[28] Polybius, l. iv. Strabo, l. viii.

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on many former occasions, they had tempted the avarice of Aristocrates, who, from want of opportunity rather than of inclination to betray, had hitherto maintained his fidelity inviolate. But when he perceived the unusual ardour which animated the enemy; and reflected, that if, without his concurrence, victory should declare itself on *their* side, he might for ever be deprived of an occasion to earn the wages of his intended iniquity, he determined to abandon his ancient allies, and to ensure success to the Lacedæmonians. In sight of the two armies he explained and exaggerated to his troops the advantageous position of the Spartans; the difficulty of a retreat, in case they themselves were obliged to give ground; and the inauspicious omens which threatened destruction to Messené. In order to avoid the ruin ready to overtake their allies, he commanded his men to be prepared to follow him on the first signal for action. When the charge was sounded, and the Messenians were preparing to resist the fierce onset of the enemy, Aristocrates led off his Arcadians; and, to make his defection more apparent, crossed the whole Messenian army. The Messenians, confounded with a treachery so bold and manifest, almost forgot that they were contending against the Spartans. Many forsook their ranks, and ran after the Arcadians, now conjuring them to return to their duty, and now reproaching them with their perfidious ingratitude. Their entreaties and insults were alike vain; their army was surrounded almost on every side; the little

The Messenians defeated.

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band of Aristomenes alone, with pertinacious valour, resisting the efforts, and breaking through the embattled squadrons, of the enemy. Their example encouraged others of their countrymen to effect an escape by equal bravery; but, in attempting this dangerous measure, the greater part of the soldiers perished, as well as the generals Androcles, Phintas, and Phanas, persons descended from the ancient stock of Messenian nobility, and who, next to Aristomenes, formed the principal ornament and defence of their declining country. CHAP. IV.

Magnanimity of Aristomenes:

Among the republics of ancient Greece, the fate of a nation often depended on the event of a battle. The contention was not between mercenary troops, who regarded war as a trade, which they carried on merely from interest, without emulation or resentment. The citizens of free communities fought for their liberties and fortunes, their wives aud children, and for every object held dear or valuable among men. In such a struggle they exerted the utmost efforts of their animosity as well as of their strength; nor did the conflict cease, till the one party had reduced the other to extremity. It was not extraordinary, therefore, that after the bloody battle of the Trenches, the Messenians should be unable to keep the field. Aristomenes, however, determined, while he preserved life, to maintain independence. With this view he collected the miserable remains of his unfortunate troops; assembled the scattered inhabitants of the open country; abandoned the cities and villages on

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he throws himself into the fortress of Eira;

the plain to the mercy of the victors; and seized, with his little army, the strong fortress of Eira, situate among the mountains which run along the southern shore of Messenia, defended on the north by the river Neda, and open only on the south towards the harbours of Pylus and Methonè, which offered it a plentiful supply of corn, fish, and other necessary provisions.

A. C. 682. —671.

In this situation the gallant Messenian resisted, for eleven years, the efforts of the Spartans, who endeavoured, with unremitting industry, to gain possession of the fortress. Nor was he satisfied with defending the place: on various occasions he made vigorous and successful sallies against the besiegers. With a body of three hundred Messenians, of tried valour and fidelity, he, at different times, over-ran the Spartan territories, and plundered such cities as were either weakly garrisoned or negligently defended. In order to put a stop to incursions equally dishonourable and destructive, the Spartans ordered their frontier to be laid waste, and thus rendered incapable of affording subsistence to the enemy. But they themselves were the first to feel the inconveniency of this measure. As the lands towards that frontier were the most fertile in the province, and the crops in other parts had failed through the inclemency of the season, the Spartans were threatened with all the calamities of famine; to which the proprietors of the wasted grounds, deprived of their harvests by a rigorous injunction of the state, were prepared to add the horrors of a sedition. Tyrtæus displayed, on this

ravages the Spartan territories;

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occasion, the wonderful power of his art, by appeasing the angry tumult, and teaching the Spartans patiently to bear, in the service of their country, the loss of fortune, as well as of life.

and plunders Amyclæ.

While the enemy were disturbed by these commotions, Aristomenes set out from Eira, with his favourite band, and, marching all night, arrived by day-break at Amyclæ, a Lacedæmonian city, situate on the banks of the Eurotas, at the distance of a few miles from the capital. Having entered the place without resistance, he carried off a considerable booty in slaves and merchandise, and returned to his mountains, before the Spartans, though apprised of his incursion, could arrive to the assistance of their neighbours.

Aristomenes taken prisoner.

A continued series of such exploits, carried on with equal success, inspired into the Messenians a degree of confidence, which had almost proved fatal to their cause. Neglecting that celerity, and those precautions to which they owed their past advantages, they began to continue so long in the field, that the Spartans found an opportunity to intercept their return. The little band of Aristomenes behaved with its usual gallantry, and long defended itself against far superior numbers, headed by the two kings of Sparta. The commander, after receiving many wounds, was taken prisoner; and, with fifty of his bravest companions, carried in chains to the Lacedæmonian capital. The resentment of that republic against those who had inflicted on her such dreadful calamities, was not to be gratified by an ordinary punishment. After much deli-

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beration, the prisoners were thrown, alive, into the Ceada; a profound cavern, commonly employed as a receptacle for the most atrocious criminals. All the companions of Aristomenes were killed by the fall; he alone was preserved by an accident, which, though natural enough in itself, has been disfigured by many fabulous circumstances.[29] The Spartans, who loved valour even in an enemy, permitted him, at his earnest desire, to be buried with his shield; a weapon of defence held in peculiar veneration by the Grecian soldiers. As he descended into the deep cavity, the edge or boss of his ample buckler, striking against the sides of the pit, broke the force of the fall, and saved his life. Two days he continued in this miserable dungeon, amidst the stench and horror of dead bodies, his face covered with his cloak, waiting the slow approaches of certain death. The third day (at day-break) he heard a noise, and looking up, perceived a fox devouring the mangled remains of his companions. He allowed the animal to approach him, and catching hold of it with one hand, while he defended himself against its bite with the other, he determined to follow wherever it should conduct him. The fox drew towards a chink in the rock, by which he had entered the cavity, and through which he intended to get out. Aristomenes then gave liberty

Thrown into the Ceada.

His wonderful preservation and escape.

[29] An eagle, it is said, flew to his relief: a fable countenanced by the spread eagle on his shield. Pausanias says, he saw the shield, which was preserved in the subterraneous chapel of Trophonius at Lebadea.

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to his guide, whom he followed with much difficulty, scrambling through the passage which had been opened for his deliverance. He immediately took the road of Eira, and was received with pleasing astonishment among his transported companions.

He surprises the Corinthian camp.

The news of his wonderful escape were soon conveyed to Sparta by some Messenian deserters, whose information on such a subject was not more credited, than if they had brought intelligence of one risen from the dead. But, in the space of a few days, the exploits of Aristomenes convinced the incredulity of the Spartans. He was informed by his scouts, that the Corinthians had sent a powerful reinforcement to the besiegers; that these troops were still on their march, observing no order of discipline in the day, and encamping during night without guards or centinels. A general less active and less enterprising, would not have neglected so favourable an occasion of annoying the enemy. But Aristomenes alone was capable of effecting this purpose by the means which were now employed. That no appearance of danger might alarm the negligence of the Corinthians, he set out unattended[30], waited their approach in concealment, attacked their camp in the dead of night, marked his route with blood, and returning loaded with spoils to Eira, offered to Messenian Jove the

[30] The exploits of Aristomenes often oblige us to remember the expression in Pausanias, p. 244.: Αριστομενην δε εργα φασι αποδειξασθαι πλεον τι η ανδρα ενα εικος ην. "That he did more than seemed possible for any one man."

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Hecatomphonia, a sacrifice of an hundred victims, which *he* alone was entitled to perform, who with his own hand had killed an hundred of his enemies. This was the third time the Messenian hero had celebrated the same tremendous rite.

The Lacedæmonians treacherously admitted into Eira.

Eleven years had the vigorous and persevering efforts of a single man prolonged the destiny of Eira. Aristomenes might have still withstood the impetuous ardour of the Spartans, but he could not withstand the unerring oracles of Apollo, which predicted the fall of the devoted city. The purpose of the god, however, was accomplished, not by open force, but by the secret treachery of a Lacedæmonian adulterer. This Lacedæmonian was the slave of Emperamus, a Spartan, who in the field yielded the post of honour only to the kings. The perfidious slave had escaped to the enemy with his master's property, and had formed an intrigue with a Messenian woman, whom he visited as often as her husband was called in his turn to guard the citadel. Amidst the miserable joys of their infamous commerce, the lovers were one night disturbed by the husband, who loudly claimed admittance, which however he did not obtain till his wife had concealed the adulterer. When the woman, with the most insidious flattery, enquiring by what excess of good fortune she was blessed with her husband's unexpected return, the simple Messenian related that the inclemency of the weather had driven the soldiers from their posts, the wind and thunder and rain being so violent that it was scarcely possible for them to

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continue any longer uncovered on the high grounds; nor could their desertion be attended with any bad consequences either to themselves or to their country, as Aristomenes was prevented by a recent wound from walking the rounds as usual, and as it could not be expected that the Spartans should venture an attack against the citadel during the obscurity and horror of a tempest. The Lacedæmonian slave overheard this recital, and thus obtained a piece of intelligence which he well knew might not only atone for his past crimes, but entitle him to gratitude from his ancient master. He cautiously escaped from his concealment, and sought with the utmost celerity the Spartan camp. Neither of the kings being then present, the command belonged to Emperamus, who readily pardoned the fortunate treachery of a servant that had afforded him the means of obtaining the highest object of his ambition. Notwithstanding the slipperiness of the steep ascent, the Spartans, by the direction of the slave, mounted the unguarded citadel, and obtained possession of all the principal posts, before the Messenians became sensible of their danger.

Obstinate defence of that place.

As soon as it was known that the enemy had entered into the city, Aristomenes, accompanied by the warlike prophet Theocles, together with their respective sons Gorgus and Manticles, endeavoured to animate the despair of their fellow-citizens, and to make them defend, to the last extremity, the little spot of ground to which they could yet apply the endearing name of country. Such however were the terrors and confusion of

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Olymp. xxvii. 2. A. C. 671.

the night, (the darkness, thunder, and tempest, being rendered still more dreadful by the presence of an armed enemy,) that it was impossible to form the Messenians into such an order of battle as might enable them to act with concert or effect. As the morning dawned, they saw the danger more distinctly than before, and the impossibility of any other assistance than what may be derived from despair. They determined, at every hazard, to attack and penetrate the Spartan battalions. Even the women armed themselves with tiles, with stones, with every weapon that presented itself to their fury. They lamented that the violence of the wind prevented them from mounting to the roofs of the houses, which they had purposed to throw down on the enemy; and declared that they would rather be buried under the ruins of their country, than dragged in captivity to Sparta. Such generous resolutions ought to have retarded the fate of Messené; but it seemed impossible to fight against superior numbers, aided by the elements, and by the manifest partiality of the gods; for the thunder happening on the right of the Spartans, afforded them an auspicious omen of future victory, and presented to the Messenians the sad prospect of impending calamities.

These circumstances, so favourable to the Spartans, were improved by the prudence of Hecatus the diviner, who advised that the soldiers who composed the last ranks, as they could not be brought up to the attack, should be remanded to the camp; and, after refreshing themselves with

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sleep and nourishment, recalled, in due time, to the assistance of their countrymen. Thus, without depriving themselves of present strength, the Spartans provided for a future supply of fresh troops; while the Messenians, engaged in continual action with the assailants, were obliged at the same time to combat cold, sleep, fatigue, and hunger. For three days and nights they withstood the combined force of these finally resistless enemies; and when at length they began to give way, the diviner Theocles threw himself into the midst of the Spartans, crying out, "That they "were not always to be victorious, nor the Mes- "senians always to be their slaves. Such was the "will of the gods! who commanded him to perish "in the wreck of a country, which, in a future "age, was destined to rise from its ruins."

Aristomenes conducts a remnant of the Messenians towards Arcadia.

It might have been expected that the patriotism of Aristomenes would have chosen the same honourable occasion of expiring with the freedom of his republic. But the general preferred life for the sake of defending the small remnant of a community, which, he flattered himself, would be immortal, not only from the prediction of Theocles, but from another circumstance equally important. When the downfal of Eira was foretold by the oracle of Apollo, the prudent chief had removed to a place of security some sacred pledges believed to contain the fate of Messené. These mysterious securities consisted of thin plates of lead, rolled up in the form of a volume, on which was engraved an account of the history and worship of the goddesses Ceres and Proser-

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pine. Having concealed in mount Ithomé this invaluable monument, which had been delivered down in veneration from the remotest antiquity, Aristomenes determined never to despair of the fortune, or to forsake the interests of his country. Although he perceived, therefore, that it was now become necessary to relinquish Eira, he did not, on this account, abandon the safety of its remaining citizens. In order to preserve them, the only expedient that could be employed, with any hopes of success, was the sounding a retreat, and the collecting into one body such of his soldiers as were not already too far engaged with the Spartans. Having accomplished this measure, he placed the women and children in the centre of the battalion, and committed the command of the rear to Gorgus and Manticles. He himself conducted the van, and marching towards the enemy with his spear equally poised, and with well-regulated valour, shewed, by his mien and countenance, that he was resolved to defend to the last extremity the little remnant of the Messenian state. The Spartans, as directed by Hecatus the diviner, opened their ranks, and allowed the enemy to pass unhurt, judiciously avoiding to irritate their despair. The Messenians abandoned their city, and in mournful silence marched towards Arcadia.

Their kind reception in that country.

As the wars of the Grecian republics were more bloody and destructive than those of modern times, so were their alliances more generous and sincere. When the Arcadians were informed of the taking of Eira, they travelled in great

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numbers towards the frontiers of their kingdom, carrying with them victuals, clothing, and all things necessary to the relief of the wretched fugitives; whom having met at mount Lycæa, they invited into their cities, offered to divide with them their lands, and to give them their daughters in marriage.[31]

Aristomenes purposes to surprise Sparta.

The generous sympathy of the Arcadians animated Aristomenes to an exploit, the boldness of which little corresponded with the depression incident to his present fortune. He had only five hundred soldiers, whose activity and strength were still equal to their valour; and these he commanded, in the presence of his allies, to march straightway to Sparta. Three hundred Arcadians desired to share the glory of this spirited enterprise; and it was hoped, that as the greater part of the Lacedæmonians were employed in plundering Eira, this small but valiant body of men might make a deep impression on a city stripped of its usual defence. The arrangements for this purpose were taken with the Arcadian King Aristocrates, whose behaviour at the battle of the Trenches had occasioned the defeat of the Messenians, and whose artifice had since persuaded them, that his shameful behaviour on that day was the effect not of perfidy, but of panic terror. A second time the treacherous Arcadian betrayed the cause of his country and its allies. Having retarded the execution of Aristomenes's project, on pretence that the appearance of the entrails was unfavourable, he dis-

Treachery and punishment of Aristocrates.

[31] Polyb. l. iv.

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Olymp. xxvii. 2. A. C. 671.

patched a confidential slave to Sparta, who disclosed the imminent danger threatening that republic to Anaxander the Lacedæmonian King. The slave was intercepted on his return, carrying a letter from that prince, in which he acknowledged the faithful services of his ancient benefactor. Upon the discovery of this letter, which totally disconcerted the intended enterprise against Sparta, the Arcadians, frantic with disappointment and rage, stoned to death the perfidious traitor who disgraced the name of king. The Messenians joined not in the execution of this substantial act of justice. Watching the countenance of Aristomenes, whose authority was equally powerful in the council and in the field, they observed, that instead of being agitated by resentment, it was softened into sorrow. The hero felt the deepest melancholy, on reflecting that the only design was now rendered abortive, by which he could ever hope to avenge the wrongs of his country. Both nations testified the most signal detestation of the character of Aristocrates. The Arcadians extinguished his name and extirpated his whole race. The Messenians erected a column near the temple of Lycæan Apollo, (so named from mount Lycæa, on the confines of Arcadia,) with an inscription, setting forth his crime and punishment, asserting the impossibility of concealing treacherous baseness from the investigation of time, and the penetrating mind of Jove, and praying the god to defend and bless the land of Arcadia.[32]

[32] The inscription is preserved by Polybius, l. iv. and by Pausanias, Messen.

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Thus ended the second Messenian war, in the autumn of the year six hundred and seventy-one before Christ. The fugitive Messenians experienced various fortunes. The aged and infirm were treated by the Arcadians, among whom they continued to reside, with all the cordial kindness of ancient hospitality. The young and enterprising took leave of their benefactors, and under the conduct of Aristomenes repaired to Cylené, an harbour belonging to the Eleans. Agreeably to the information which they had received, they found in that place their countrymen of Pylus and Methoné, with whom they consulted about the means of acquiring new establishments. It was determined, by the advice of their Elean friends, not to undertake any expedition for this purpose until the return of spring, when they should again convene in full assembly, finally to conclude this important deliberation. Having met at the time appointed, they agreed unanimously to commit their future fortunes to the wisdom and paternal care of Aristomenes, who declared his opinion for establishing a distant colony, but declined the honour of conducting it in person, and named for this office the brave Messenian youths, Gorgus and Manticles. The former of these inheriting his father's hatred against Sparta, advised his countrymen to take possession of the island Zacynthus, which, from its situation in the Ionian sea, lay conveniently for harassing the maritime parts of Laconia. Manticles proposed a different opinion, observing that the island of Sardinia, though less advantageously

Future fortune of the Messenians.

Olymp. xxvii. 3. A. C. 670.

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situate for the purposes of revenge, was far better adapted to supply the necessary comforts of life; and that the Messenians, if once settled in that large and beautiful island, would soon forget the calamities which Sparta had inflicted on them. It is uncertain whether motives of vengeance or utility would have prevailed with the Messenians; for, before any resolution was taken on this important subject, a messenger arrived from Rhegium, then governed by Anaxilas, a prince descended from the royal house of Massenia, who invited his wandering countrymen to a safe and honourable retreat in his dominions. When, agreeably to this invitation, they arrived at Rhegium, Anaxilas informed them, that his subjects were continually harassed by the piratical depredations of the Zancleans, an Eolian colony[33], who possessed a delightful territory on the opposite coast. With the assistance of the Messenians it would be easy (he observed) to destroy that nest of pirates; a measure by which the city of Rhegium might be delivered from very troublesome neighbours, and the Messenians enabled to establish themselves in the most delicious situation of the whole Sicilian coast. The proposal was received with alacrity; the armament sailed for Sicily; the Zancleans were besieged by sea and land. When they perceived that part of their wall was destroyed, and that they could derive no advantage from continuing in arms, they took refuge in the temples of their gods. Even from

[33] Thucydid. l. vi.

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these respected asylums, the resentment of Anaxilas was ready to tear them; but he was restrained by the humanity of the Messenians, who had learned from their own calamities to pity the miserable. The Zancleans, thus delivered from the sword and from servitude, the ordinary consequences of unsuccessful war, swore eternal gratitude to their generous protectors. The Messenians repaid this friendly sentiment with an increase of bounty; they allowed the Zancleans either to leave the place, or to remain in the honourable condition of citizens; the two nations gradually coalesced into one community; and Zanclé, in memory of the conquest, changed its name to Messené[34], a name which may still be recognised after the revolution of twenty-five centuries.

And of Aristomenes.

It has been already observed, that Aristomenes declined the honour of conducting the colony. His subsequent fortune is differently related by ancient writers.[35] Pausanias, to whom we are

[34] Such is the account of Pausanias, or rather of the ancient authors whom he follows. But it must not be dissembled, that Herodotus, lib. vi. c. 23. Thucydides, p. 114. and Diodorus, lib. xi. place Anaxilas, King of Rhegium, much later than the second Messenian war. It deserves to be considered, that Pausanias, writing expressly on the subject, is entitled to more credit than authors who only speak of it incidentally. But when we reflect that these authors are Herodotus and Thucydides, there seems no way of solving the difficulty, but by supposing two princes of the name of Anaxilas, to the latter of whom his countrymen, by a species of flattery not uncommon in Greece, ascribed the transactions of the former.

[35] Confer Pausan. Messen. & Plin. l. xi. cap. 70. Val. Maxim. lib. i. cap. 8.

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indebted for the fullest account of the Messenian hero, informs us, that he sailed to the isle of Rhodes with Demagetes, the king of the city and territory of Ialysus in that island, who being advised by the oracle of Apollo to marry the daughter of the most illustrious personage in Greece, had without hesitation preferred the daughter of Aristomenes. From Rhodes he sailed to Ionia, and thence travelled to Sardis, with an intention of presenting himself to Ardys, king of the Lydians, probably to propose some enterprise to the ambition of that prince, which might finally be productive of benefit to Messené. But upon his arrival at Sardis he was seized with a distemper which put an end to his life. Other generals have defended their country with better success, but none with greater glory; other characters are more fully delineated in ancient history, but none more deserving of immortal fame: since, whatever is known of Aristomenes tends to prove, that according to the principles of his age and country, he united, in singular perfection, the merits of the citizen and of the soldier, the powers of the understanding and the virtues of the heart.

His death and character.

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CHAP. V.

State of the Peloponnesus after the Conquest of Messenia. — Of the Northern Republics of Greece. — Of the Grecian Colonies. — Revolutions in Government. — Military Transactions. — The first sacred War. — Destruction of the Crissean Republic. — Restoration of the Pythian Games. — Description of the Gymnastic and Equestrian Exercises. — History of Grecian Music.

CHAP. V.

State of Greece after the conquest of Messenia, and first of the Peloponnesus. Olymp. xxviii. 1. A. C. 668.

THE conquest of Messenia rendered Sparta the most considerable power in Greece. The Peloponnesus, formerly comprehending seven, now contained only six independent states. The subjects of Sparta alone occupied two-fifths of the whole peninsula. The remainder was unequally divided among the Corinthians, Achæans, Eleans, Arcadians, and Archives. In a narrow extent of territory, these small communities exhibited a wonderful variety of character and manners. The central district of Arcadia, consisting of one continued cluster of mountains, was inhabited by a hardy race of herdsmen, proud of their ancestry, and confident in their own courage and the strength of their country. Their Eolian extraction, their jealousy, and their pride, made them disdain connection with the Dorians, by whose possessions they were on all sides surrounded. Careless of the arts of peace,

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they were engaged in unceasing hostilities with their neighbours, by whom they were despised as barbarians, and whom they condemned as upstarts; since, amidst all the revolutions of Peloponnesus, the Arcadians alone had ever maintained their original establishments.[1]

Contrast between the Arcadians and Corinthians.

The industrious and wealthy Corinthians presented a very different spectacle. Inhabiting the mountainous isthmus, which, towering between two seas, connects the Peloponnesus with the north of Greece, the Corinthians long formed the principal centre of inland communication and foreign commerce.[2] Towards the southern extremity of the isthmus, and at the foot of their impregnable fortress Acro-Corinthus, they had built a fair and spacious city, extending its branches on either side to the Saronic and Corinthian gulphs, whose opposite waves vainly assailed their narrow but lofty territory.[3] Their harbours and their commerce gave them colonies and a naval power. They are said to have improved the very inconvenient ships, or rather long-boats used in early times, into the more capacious form of Trireme[4] gal-

[1] Pausan. Arcad. Strabo, l. viii. p. 388.

[2] Pausan. Corinth. c. 4. [3] Strabo, l. viii. p. 379.

[4] The Triremes, Quadriremes, Quinqueremes of the ancients were so denominated from the number of the ranks, or tiers of oars on each side the vessel; which number constituted what we may call the rate of the antient ships of war. It was long a desideratum in the science of antiquities to determine the manner of arranging these ranks of oars, as well as to ascertain the position of the rowers. The bulk of commentators and antiquaries placed the sedilia, or seats, in rows, immediately above each other, upon the sides of the vessel, which they supposed perpendicular to the surface of the

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lies.[5] Their sea-fight against their rebellious colony, Corcyra, is the first naval engagement recorded in history.[6] It was fought six hundred

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Political revolutions in Corinth. A. C. 779. —till 585.

[5] Thucydid. l. i. c. xiii. [6] Ibid.

water. But the least knowledge of naval architecture destroys that supposition. The rowers, thus placed, must have obstructed each other; they must have occupied too large a space, and rowed with too unfavourable an angle on the ship's side; above all, the length and weight of the oars required for the upper tiers, must have rendered the working of them totally impracticable, especially as we know from ancient writers, that there was but one man to each oar. These inconveniences were pointed out by many; but the ingenuity of Lieutenant-General Melvill explained how to remedy them. He conjectured that the waist part of the ancient galleys, at the distance of a few feet above the water's edge, rose obliquely, with an angle of 45°, or near it: that upon the inner sides of this waist part, the seats of the rowers, each above two feet in length, were fixed, horizontally, in rows, with no more space between each seat, and those on all sides of it, than should be found necessary for the free movements of men when rowing together. The quincunx, or chequer order, would afford this advantage in the highest degree possible, and, in consequence of the combination of two obliquities, the inconveniences above-mentioned totally disappear. In 1773 the General caused the fifth part of the waist of a Quinqueremis to be erected in the back-yard of his house in Great Pulteney-street. This model contained, with sufficient ease, in a very small space, thirty rowers, in five tiers of six men in each, lengthways, making one-fifth part of the rowers on each side of a Quinqueremis, according to Polybius, who assigns three hundred for the whole complement, besides one hundred and twenty fighting men. This construction, the advantages of which must appear evident to all who examine it, serves to explain many difficult passages of the Greek and Roman writers concerning naval matters. The General's discovery is confirmed by ancient monuments. On several pieces of sculpture, particularly at Rome, he found the figures of war-galleys, or parts of them, with the oars represented as coming down from oar-holes disposed chequerwise. In the Capo di Monte Palace at Naples, the reverse of a large Medaglione of Gordianus has the figure of a Triremis, with three tiers, each of fourteen or fifteen oars, issuing chequerwise from an oblique side. The collection at Portici con-

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and fifty years before Christ, at which time the Corinthians (as the ideas of wealth and luxury are relative) were already regarded by their neighbours as a wealthy and luxurious people. The influence of wealth to produce servitude prevailed over that of commerce, which is favourable to liberty. Their government, after the abolition of monarchy, was usurped by a numerous branch of the royal family, styled Bacchiadæ.[7] This oligarchy was destroyed by Cypselus, a mild and gentle ruler[8], whose family governed Corinth till the year five hundred and eighty-five before Christ.

Contrast between the Argives and Achæans.

The contrast between Arcadia and Corinth was not more striking than that between Argolis and Achaia. The citizens of Argos, having expelled their kings, were seized with an ambition to reduce and domineer over the inferior towns in the province. The insolence of the capital provoked the indignation of the country. Mycenæ, Trœzené, Epidaurus, and other places of less note, were often conquered, but never thoroughly subdued. Interest taught them to unite; and union enabled them to set at defiance the

[7] Pausan. Corinth.

[8] Aristot. Polit. l. v. c. xii.

tains ancient paintings of several galleys, one or two of which, by presenting the stern part, show both the obliquity of the sides, and the rows of oars reaching to the water.—The substance of this note is already published in Governor Pownall's Antiquities. The governor, however, speaks of a gallery for the rowers, which I did not observe in the General's model; nor do I apprehend that such a gallery could be necessary, as the purpose, for which it is supposed to have been intended, is completely answered by the waist part of the vessel.

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power of Argos, by which they were branded as rebellious, and which they reproached as tyrannical.[9] The fortunate district of Achaia, having successfully resisted the oppression of Ogygus, an unworthy descendant of Agamemnon, established at a very early period a democratical form of policy.[10] Twelve cities, each of which retained its municipal jurisdiction, united on a foot of perfect equality and freedom. This equitable confederacy prepared the way for the Achæan laws, so celebrated in latter times, when the cause of Greece, shamefully abandoned by more powerful guardians, was defended by the feeble communities of Achaia.[11]

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Between the Lacedæmonians and Elians.

We have already had occasion to explain the important institutions of Iphitus and Lycurgus. The very opposite systems adopted by these great legislators, respectively suited the weakness of Elis and the strength of Sparta; and occasioned a remarkable contrast between the peaceful tranquillity of the former republic[12], and the warlike ambition of the latter, the lines of whose national character grew more bold and decisive after the Messenian conquest. The piteous remnant of the Messenians, who had defended their freedom with the most persevering bravery, was reduced to a cruel and ignominious vassalage. Confounded with the miserable mass of Helots, those

[9] Pausan. l. vi. c. xxi. Diodor. Sicul. l. xi. p. 275.
[10] Pausan. Achaic. Strabo, l. viii. p. 383, et seq.
[11] Polyb. l. ii. [12] Pausan. Eliac. & Strabo, l. viii.

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wretched victims of Spartan cruelty, they were condemned to laborious drudgery, exposed to daily insult, and compelled (still more intolerable!) to tend their own flocks, and cultivate their own fields, for the benefit of relentless tyrants.[13] The haughty temper of the Spartans became continually more presumptuous. They totally disdained such arts and employments as they usually saw practised by the industry of slaves. War, and hunting as the image of war, were the only occupations which it suited their dignity to pursue; and this constant exercise in arms, directed by the military code of Lycurgus, rendered them superior in the field of battle, not only to the neighbouring states of Peloponnesus, but to the bravest and most renowned republics beyond the Corinthian isthmus.

State of the northern republics of Greece.

While the Grecian peninsula was agitated by the stubborn conflict between the Spartans and Messenians, the northern states had been disturbed by petty wars, and torn by domestic discord.[14]

Of the Grecian colonies.

The Greek settlements in Thrace, in Africa, and Magna Græcia, were yet too feeble to attract the regard of history. But, during the period now under review, the Asiatic colonies, as shall be explained in a subsequent chapter, far surpassed their European brethren in splendour and prosperity.

Political revolutions in Athens.

Having abolished the regal office, the Athenians, whose political revolutions were followed with remarkable uniformity by neighbouring

[13] Pausanias, Messeniac.

[14] Thucydid. l. i.

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states, submitted the chief administration of their affairs to a magistrate intitled Archon, or ruler. The authority of the Archon long continued hereditary: it became afterwards decennial: at length nine annual archons were appointed by the powerful class of nobility, consisting not only of the descendants of such foreign princes as had taken refuge in Athens, but of those Athenian families which time and accident had raised to opulence and distinction. The great body of the people gained nothing by these revolutions. The equestrian order, so called from their fighting on horseback, which, before the improvement of tactics, rendered them superior to every rencounter with the disorderly rabble, enjoyed all authority religious, civil, and military.[15] The Athenian populace were reduced to a condition of miserable servitude; nor did they recover their ancient and hereditary freedom until the admired institutions of Theseus were restored and improved by Solon, towards the beginning of the sixth century before Christ.

CHAP. V.

A. C. 754.

A. C. 684.

A. C. 594.

The domestic dissensions which prevailed in every state beyond the isthmus, were only interrupted by foreign hostilities. Interference of interest occasioned innumerable contests between the Phocians and Thebans, the Dorians and Thessalians, the Locrians and Ætolians.[16] Their various inroads, battles, and sieges, which were begun with passion, carried on without prudence,

Unimportance of the military transactions preceding the first Sacred War. Olymp. xlvi. A. C. 600.

[15] Aristot. Politic. l. iv. c. xiii.

[16] Isocrat. Panathen.

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and concluded without producing any permanent effect, have been consigned by ancient historians to a just oblivion. But the first Sacred War is recommended to our attention, both on account of the cause from which it arose, and the consequences with which it was attended. This memorable enterprise was occasioned by an injury committed against the oracle of Delphi; it was undertaken by order of the Amphictyons; it ended in the total destruction of the cities accused of sacrilegious outrage; and its successful conclusion was celebrated by the Pythian games and festivals; which, of all Grecian institutions, had the most direct as well as most powerful tendency to refine rudeness and soften barbarity.

Description of the republic of Crissa.

The territory of the Crisseans, extending southward from that of Delphi, comprehended, in an extent of about twenty-four miles in length and fifteen in breadth, three large and flourishing cities; Crissa, the capital, which gave name to the province; Cirrha, advantageously situated for commerce on the western side of a creek of the Corinthian Gulph; and Anticirrha, on the eastern side of the same creek, celebrated for the production of hellebore, as well as for the skill with which the natives prepared that medicinal plant, the virtues of which were so much extolled and exaggerated by credulous antiquity.[16]

Its prosperity and insolence.

The Crisseans possessed all the means of happiness, but knew not how to enjoy them. Their

[16] Strabo and Pliny.

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territory, though small, was fertile; and as its value was enhanced by the comparative sterility of the greatest part of Phocis [17], it acquired and deserved the epithet of *Happy*. Their harbour being frequented by vessels, not only from Greece, but from Italy and Sicily, they carried on an extensive foreign commerce, considering the limited communication between distant countries in that early age; and the neighbourhood of Delphi, at which it was impossible to arrive without passing through their dominions, brought them considerable accessions of wealth [18], as well as of dignity and respect. But these advantages, instead of satisfying, increased the natural avidity of the Crisseans. They began to exact vexatious and exorbitant duties from the merchants who came to expose their wares in the sacred city, which, on account of the great concourse of profligate pilgrims from every quarter, soon became the seat, not of devotion only, but of dissipation, vanity, and licentious pleasure. It was in vain for the merchants to exclaim against these unexampled impositions; the taxes were continually increased; the evil admitted not the expectation of either remedy or relief; and the strangers, familiarised to it by custom, began to submit without murmur; perhaps enduring the hardship with the greater patience, when they perceived that they drew back the tax in the increased price of their commodities. Encouraged by this acquiescence in their tyranny, the Cris-

CHAP. V.

Exacts contributions from the merchants and strangers who resorted to the oracle of Delphi.

[17] Strabo, p. 523, et seq.

[18] Pausan. in Phocic.

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seans levied a severe impost on the pilgrims, whether Greeks or Barbarians, who visited the temple of Apollo; a measure directly inconsistent with a decree of the Amphictyons, which declared that all men should have free access to the oracle [19], as well as extremely hurtful to the interest of the Delphians, who soon felt a gradual diminution of their profits from the holy shrine. It was natural for those who sustained a loss either of gain or of authority, to remonstrate against the extortions of the Crisseans; but their remonstrances, instead of producing any happy alteration of behaviour, only exasperated men grown insolent through prosperity. In the time of profound peace, the Crisseans, provoked by useful admonitions, which they proudly called threats, entered with an armed force the territories of their neighbours; destroyed every thing that opposed them with fire and sword; laid the defenceless cities under heavy contributions, and carried many of the inhabitants into servitude. [20] Delphi itself, however much it was revered in Greece, and respected even by the most distant nations, appeared to the sacrilegious invaders an object better fitted to gratify lust of plunder, than to excite emotions of piety. Neighbourhood had rendered them familiar with the woods, temples, and grottoes of the presiding divinity; with the manners and character of many of his ministers they were probably too well acquainted to hold them in much reverence;

[19] Strabo, l. ix. p. 418.

[20] Æschin. in Ctesiphont.

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and having deserved their resentment by what they had already done, they resolved to render it impotent by what they should next accomplish. CHAP. V.

The design of plundering Delphi was no sooner formed than executed. The imaginations of men were not prepared for such an event; nor had any measures been taken to prevent such an unexpected and abominable profanation. The enemy meeting with no resistance, became masters of the temple, and seized the rich votive offerings accumulated by the pious generosity of ages. Thence they passed into the sacred wood, and rendered furious through pride or guilt, attacked, plundered, and murdered the promiscuous crowd, who were employed in the usual exercise of their devotions. The young were insulted with a licentiousness of rage, violating decency and nature. Even a deputation of the Amphictyons, clothed in the venerable garb, and bearing the respected ensigns of their office, were repelled with blows and contumely, while they vainly attempted to stop the fatal progress of these frantic and impious outrages, committed against every thing held sacred among men.[21] The Crisseans plunder the shrine of Delphi.

The Amphictyonic council, to whom it belonged to judge and to punish the atrocious enormities of the Crisseans, experienced in an uncommon degree, those inconveniences to which all numerous assemblies are in some measure liable. Their proceedings were retarded by Measures of the Amphictyonic council.

[21] Pausan. in Phocic.

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formality, warped by prejudice, and disturbed by dissension. Notwithstanding the aggravated crimes of the Crisseans, it was not without encountering many difficulties and much opposition, that Solon, one of the Athenian representatives, roused his associates to the resolution of avenging the offended majesty of religion, the violated laws of nature, and their own personal injuries. When at length they concurred in this useful and pious design, the measures pursued on the present occasion, as well as in all the future wars undertaken by their authority, were equally slow and indecisive. The forces which they at first brought into the field were by no means equal to the enterprise for which they were designed. After various reinforcements, they attempted ineffectually, during nine summers and winters, to reduce the towns of Crissa and Cirrha, which finally submitted, in the tenth year of the war, rather to the art than to the power of the besiegers.

The principal events in the Sacred War.

The events of the preceding years strongly paint the ignorance, the superstition, and the rude manners of the times. The Crisseans had no sooner plundered, than they abandoned the temple of Apollo. Thither, by the advice of Solon, the Amphictyons sent messengers to consult the oracle concerning the proper means, as well as the just measure, of their vengeance. They were commanded instantly to levy war on the Crisseans; to persecute them to the last extremity; to demolish their towns, to desolate their country, and after consecrating it to

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Apollo, Diana, Latona, and Minerva, to prevent it from ever thenceforth being cultivated for the service of man.[22] In obedience to this peremptory injunction of the god, the Amphictyons returned to their several republics, in order to collect troops, and to animate the exertions of their countrymen in the common cause. The Greeks, however, were too deeply engaged in domestic dissensions, to make effectual efforts for the glory of Apollo. Few adventurers repaired to the holy standard; and the war, neither supported by vigour of execution, nor directed by wisdom of deliberation, languished for several years under different generals. At length Eurylochus, a Thessalian prince of great valour and activity, was intrusted with the command of the Amphictyonic army.[23] The new general waited till the time of harvest, to ravage the open country, to destroy the villages by fire and sword, and to desolate the *happy* Crissean plain.

Siege of Crissa.

On several occasions he defeated the army of the Crisseans, who made frequent and vigorous sallies in order to defend their possessions. But when he attempted to make an impression on the fortified strength of Crissa, its thick walls, its lofty towers, and above all, the activity and courage of its citizens, presented obstacles which it was impossible to surmount. The art of besieging towns still continued in a state of great imperfection. The battering-rams, and other engines employed in this operation of war,

[22] Æschin. ibid.

[23] Plut. in Solon. Strabo, l. ix. Polyænus, l. vi. c. xv.

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were of too rude a construction to make such a breach in the walls as might not easily be repaired. It was in vain that Eurylochus attempted by blockade to reduce the place. The enemy were furnished with all necessaries in great abundance, from the well-frequented port of Cirrha. Years thus passed away, and nothing decisive was effected. The besiegers, fatigued with labour, and uneasy at disappointment, had often abandoned their camp, and cantoned themselves on the borders of the Crissean territory, where they expected more salutary supplies of provisions.

Pestilence in the army of the besiegers,

When they again returned to their duty, they were afflicted in the ninth year of the war, with a pestilential, or at least an epidemic disorder, occasioned by the want of wholesome food, the great numbers of men cooped up during the warm season within a narrow space, or by some unknown malignity of the atmosphere. A great part of the army fell a prey to the increasing contagion. Anxious for the public safety, the Amphictyons had recourse to the wisdom of Apollo, who, instead of recommending to them the aid of an able physician, exhorted them to bring from the isle of Cos the *fawn with gold.* Ambassadors were immediately dispatched to that island, in order to unravel the meaning of the gold thus wrapped up in its customary veil of mystic obscurity. They had no sooner explained their commission in the Caon assembly, than an eminent citizen, named Nebros, rising up, declared the sense of the oracle. "I am

remedied by Nebros of Cos.

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"the fawn," said he, "pointed out by Apollo," (for Nebros in Greek signifies a fawn,) "and my "son Chrysos" (which is the Greek word for gold) "has carried off the prize of strength, "courage, and beauty, from all his competitors." The person who thus spoke was justly celebrated, on account of his ancestor Esculapius, of his descendant Hippocrates[24], and of his own unrivalled proficiency in the healing art. The knowledge of physic was become the hereditary honour, and almost the appropriate possession, of his family, by which it had been cultivated for many ages, and to which it is supposed even at present to owe its principal improvement and perfection. Nebros obeyed with alacrity the injunction of Apollo, the peculiar patron of the science in which he excelled. At his own expence he equipped a vessel of fifty oars, loaded with valuable medicines, as well as with warlike stores, and accompanied by his son Chrysos, set sail with the Amphictyonic ambassadors, in order to cure the confederates, and to conquer the Crisseans.

Sack of Crissa.

His advice, his prudence, and his assiduity, restored the decaying health of the army. Their numbers, however, were already so much diminished, that it seemed impossible by open force to put a successful end to the war. On this occasion the artful Coan employed a stratagem, that

[24] We owe, almost entirely, the history recorded in the text, to an oration of Thessalus, son of Hippocrates, addressed to the Athenians. It is published among the letters of his father. Vid. Hippocrat. Opera, ex edit. Fæsii, v. ii. p. 1291. There are some learned dissertations on the subject in the 5th and 7th volumes of the Memoirs of the Academy of Belles Lettres.

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would have appeared entirely inconsistent with the laws of arms which had long been established in Greece, if it had not seemed to be the dictate of a divine admonition. The horse of Eurylochus was observed for several days to roll on the sand, and to strike his foot with great violence against a particular spot of ground. In digging under this ground, a wooden pipe was discovered, which supplied Crissa with water. The extraordinary means by which this discovery was made, convinced the ignorant credulity of the Greeks, that some important advantage might be derived from it; and upon mature deliberation it was concluded, that Apollo had thus suggested a contrivance for destroying his own and their enemies. Complying therefore with the heavenly intimation, Nebros poisoned the conduit of water; and the effect of this detestable artifice was soon discernible in the languid efforts and diminished resistance of the besieged. The besiegers, on the other hand, encouraged by the evident partiality of the gods, carried on their operation with redoubled vigour. Rewards were proposed for the man who should first mount the walls, an honour obtained by the youthful ardour of Chrysos. The city was thus taken by assault; the fortifications were demolished, the houses burnt, and the inhabitants treated with a severity proportioned to the atrocious enormity of their own crimes, and the exasperated resentment of the victors.

Consecration of the Cirrhean plain,

The command of Apollo, however, was not completely executed by the destruction of the

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Crissean capital. Part of that impious community still subsisted in the maritime town of Cirrha, the reduction of which must have presented great difficulties to the Amphictyons, since it was necessary for them a third time to have recourse to the oracle. The answer delivered on this occasion was involved in twofold obscurity. The words of the god, at all times dark and doubtful, now seemed absolutely unintelligible, since he made the taking of Cirrha, an event which there was every reason to expect, depend on a circumstance that appeared at first sight impossible. "You "shall not overturn," said he, "the lofty towers "of Cirrha, until the foaming billows of blue-eyed "Amphitrité beat against the resounding shores "of the Holy Land." How could the sea be conveyed for several leagues over rocks and mountains, so that its waves might dash against the craggy precipices of Parnassus, which surround the sacred groves of Delphi? This was an enigma which the oldest and most experienced members of the Amphictyonic council acknowledged themselves unable to explain. The condition on which success was promised them, seemed incapable of being fulfilled; the inhabitants of Cirrha flattered themselves with hopes of unalterable security; and the wisest of the Amphictyons gave their opinion, that there was good reason to abandon an enterprise which seemed disagreeable to Apollo, by whose advice the war had been originally undertaken.

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advised by Solon,

While these sentiments universally prevailed in both armies, Solon, the Athenian, alone ven-

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tured to propose an advice more advantageous for the confederates, as well as more honourable for the holy shrine. His superior wisdom taught him the impiety of supposing that the god should require an impossibility as the condition of happily terminating a war, the first measures of which he had himself suggested or approved. It exceeded, indeed, human power to remove the sea to the boundary of the Holy Land; but by extending this boundary, it was possible to make the Holy Land communicate with the sea. This might easily be accomplished, since it sufficed for that purpose to consecrate the intermediate space with the same ceremonies which had formerly been employed in dedicating the Delphian territory. [25]

and put in execution.

The opinion of Solon, proposed with much solemn gravity, was honoured with the unanimous approbation of his associates. Every one now wondered that he himself should not have hit on an expedient which seemed so natural and so obvious. Preparations were immediately made for carrying it into execution, and the property of the Cirrhean plain was surrendered to the god with the most pompous formality; the Amphictyons, either not considering that they bestowed on Apollo what, as it was not their own, they had not a right to alienate; or, if this idea occurred, easily persuading themselves that the piety of the application would atone for the defect of the title.

[25] Plutarch. in Solon. Pausan. in Phoc.

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When the senators had performed the consecration, the soldiers assailed the walls of Cirrha with the increasing activity of re-animated hope. That place, as well as the dependent town of Anticirrha, situate on the opposite side of the creek, soon submitted to their arms. The impious and devoted citizens were either put to the sword, or dragged into captivity. The Crissean community, formerly so rich and flourishing was for ever extirpated.[26] Their lands were laid waste, their cities demolished, the proud monuments of their victories levelled with the ground; and the port of Cirrha, which was allowed to remain as a convenient harbour for Delphi, subsisted as the only vestige of their ancient grandeur. The territory, as it had been condemned by the divine will to perpetual sterility, long continued uncultivated; for the Delphians were not obliged to labour the ground in order to acquire the necessaries, the accommodations, and even the highest luxuries of life. The superstition of the age furnished an abundant resource to supply their wants; the granaries of Apollo filled spontaneously; and, to use the figurative style of an ancient author, the land unploughed and unsown by the industry of man, flourished in the richest luxuriance under the culture of the god.[27]

Cirrha taken, and consequences of the war.

The successful event of a war begun, carried on, and concluded under the respectable sanc-

The happy issue of the sacred

[26] Æschin. in Ctesiphont.

[27] Εφυετο τα παντα υπο γεωργῳ τῳ θεῳ. LUCIAN. Phalar. ii.

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war celebrated by the Pythian games. Olymp. xlvii. 2. A. C. 590.

tion of the Amphictyonic council, was celebrated with all the pomp and festivity congenial to the Grecian character. According to an ancient and sacred institution, the several republics were accustomed, by public shows, to commemorate their respective victories. When different communities had employed their joint efforts in the same glorious enterprise, the grateful triumph was exhibited with a proportional increase of magnificence; but the fortunate exploits of gods and heroes, which had extensively benefited the whole Grecian name, were distinguished by such peculiar and transcendent honours as eclipsed the splendour of all other solemnities. While each republic paid the tribute of provincial festivals to the memory of its particular benefactors, the whole nation were concerned in acknowledging the bountiful goodness of Jupiter, the protecting aid of Neptune, the unerring wisdom of Apollo, and the unrivalled labours of Hercules. Hence the Olympian, Isthmian, Pythian, and Nemean games, which, though alike founded on the same principle of pious gratitude, were, from their first establishment, distinguished by the different ceremonies, and respectively consecrated to separate divinities.

The Amphictyons were principally indebted to the prudent admonitions of Apollo for the fortunate issue of a war undertaken by his authority; it therefore became them, while they rejoiced in the happy success of their arms, to offer respectful thanks to the god. These ob-

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jects might easily be conjoined in the pliant texture of ancient superstition, since the celebration of the Pythian games, which had been interrupted by a long train of wars and calamities, would form an entertainment not less agreeable to the supposed dictates of piety, than adapted to the natural demands of pleasure.

This festival distinguished from the preceding by two circumstances.

The festival re-established on this memorable occasion in honour of Apollo, is mentioned by ancient historians, on account of two remarkable circumstances by which it was distinguished. Instead of the scanty rewards usually distributed among the gymnastic combatants at other public solemnities, the Amphictyons bestowed on the victors the most precious spoils of the cities Crissa and Cirrha. The exhibitions of poetry and music had hitherto been united in all the Grecian festivals, and the laurel crown had been adjudged to the poet-musician, who enlivened the compositions of his genius by the sound of his lyre. The Amphictyons for the first time separated the kindred arts; proposed prizes of instrumental music unaccompanied with poetry, and thus afforded an opportunity to candidates for fame to display superior merit in their respective departments of the same profession.

History of the sacred games.

These are the only particulars concerning the re-establishment of the Pythian games which seemed worthy the observation of Grecian authors, whose works were addressed to men who knew by experience and observation the nature and tendency of their domestic institutions. But a more copious explanation is required, to satisfy

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the curiosity of the modern reader. The sacred games of Greece cannot be illustrated by a comparison with any thing similar in the present age; they were intimately connected with the whole system of ancient polity, whether civil or religious; they were attended with very extraordinary effects, both of a natural and moral kind; and on all these accounts they merit particular attention in a work which professes to combine with the history of arts that of arms, and to contemplate the varying picture of human manners, as well as the transient revolutions of war and empire.

In their most perfect form, the sacred games consisted in the exhibitions of the Stadium and Hippodrome, accompanied by the more refined entertainments of music and poetry. The Olympic Stadium took its name from the measure of length most commonly employed by the Greeks, consisting of the eighth part of a Grecian mile, or six hundred and thirty English feet. The Stadium, still remaining at Athens, has been accurately measured by our travellers, and is an hundred and twenty-five geometrical paces in length, and twenty-seven in breadth: it forms a long and lofty terrace on the banks of the Ilyssus, and its sides were anciently built of white marble. That of Olympia was probably of the same dimensions, but far less magnificent, being entirely composed of earth. The one extremity contained an elevated throne, appropriated for the judges of the games, and a marble altar, on which the priestess of Ceres, and other privi-

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leged virgins, sat to behold a solemnity from which the rest of their sex were rigorously excluded. At the other extremity was the tomb of Endymion, the favourite of chaste Diana. The stadium was divided by pillars into two courses. The five gymnastic exercises, so much celebrated by all the writers of antiquity, and so accurately described by Homer, Pindar, Sophocles, and Pausanias, began with the foot-race, which is supposed to have been the most ancient, and which always retained the prerogative of distinguishing the Olympiads by the name of the victorious racer. The exercise at first consisted in running naked from the one end of the Stadium to the other. The course was afterwards doubled, and at length the competitors were required to pass the goal three, six, and even twelve times, before they could be entitled to the prize. Motives of utility introduced the race of men loaded with heavy armour, which rendered this exercise a contest of strength as well as of swiftness. 2. The second trial of agility consisted in leaping, the competitors endeavouring to surpass each other in the length, without regard to the height of their leap. They carried in their hands weights of lead, through the perforations of which their fingers passed as through the handle of a shield, and by these they poised, and impelled forwards, their bodies. The perfection attained in this exercise must have far exceeded the experience of modern times, if we

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can believe that Phaulus of Crotona[28] leaped fifty-two feet. 3. The wrestling of the ancients required equal strength and agility. It was chiefly remarkable on account of the oil and sand with which they rubbed their bodies, in order to supple their joints, to prevent excessive perspiration, and to elude the grasp of their antagonists. The wrestlers were matched by lot, and the prize was adjudged to him who had thrice thrown his adversary on the ground. 4. The two following exercises tried chiefly the strength of the arms. The first consisted in throwing a huge mass of polished iron, brass, or stone, of a circular form resembling a shield, but without handle or thong. It was called the disk, and thrown under the hand as the quoit is in England. The object of the competitors was to surpass each other in the length of the cast. Akin to this was the art of darting the javelin, which, as that weapon was directed at a mark, required steadiness of eye as well as dexterity of hand. 5. The last of the gymnastic exercises, both in order and in esteem, was that of boxing. It was sometimes performed by the naked fist, and sometimes with the formidable cæstus, composed of raw hides lined with metal. Before the victory could be decided, it was necessary, from the nature of that exercise, that one of the combatants should acknowledge his defeat; a condition which seemed so inconsistent with the obstinacy of Grecian valour, that few

[28] Pausanias, p. 624.

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ventured to contend in this dangerous amusement. The laws of Sparta absolutely prohibited her citizens from ever engaging in it, because a Spartan was taught to disdain saving his life by yielding to an opponent. Another reason, no less remarkable, tended still more to degrade the exercise of boxing. Besides strength and agility, the success of the boxer it was thought, depended on a certain ponderous fleshiness of arm, which unfitted him to engage in any other contest. The regimen required for keeping up his corpulency, so necessary for the defence of his bones against the weight of blows, was altogether incompatible with the life of a soldier; a life of hardship and inequality, and continually exposed to the want of rest, of provisions, and of sleep. CHAP. V.

These were the five gymnastic exercises in which the Grecian youth were trained with so much care, and to which they applied with so much emulation. But besides these simple sports, there were two others formed of their various combination; the Pancratium, which consisted of wrestling and boxing; and the Pentathlon, in which all the five were united; and to excel in such complicated exercises required an education and way of living not necessary to be observed by those who contended in the simple feats of strength and agility, and which was scarcely compatible with the study of any other than the athletic profession.

The Hippodrome, or ground allotted for the The Hippodrome

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CHAP. V. and Equestrian exercises.

horse-races, was twice as long as the Stadium [29], and sufficiently spacious to allow forty chariots to drive abreast. [30] The chariot-race was instituted at Olympia about an hundred years after the regular celebration of the games, and that of riding horses twenty years later. These warlike sports followed the same progress with the military art, of which they were the image, and in which the use of chariots long preceded that of cavalry. The cars of the Greeks, as evidently appears from their medals, were low, open behind, furnished with only two wheels, and unprovided with any seat for the drivers, who stood with much difficulty in the body of their vehicles, while they commanded four horses, which were not paired but formed on one line. Notwithstanding this inconvenient posture, they performed six and sometimes twelve rounds of the Hippodrome, amounting to six Grecian miles, of eight hundred paces each, of which an English mile contains one thousand five hundred and fifty. The Grecian heroes excelled, during the heroic ages, in this dangerous exercise; but in later times the owners of the horses were allowed to employ a charioteer, which enlarged the sphere of candidates for the Olympic prize, by admitting many foreign princes, as well as the wealthy ladies of Macedon and Laconia, who could not appear in person at this important solemnity. Though riding horses were not so early employed as chariots, either at the games, or in war, yet we cannot believe, with a fanciful

[29] Hesychius. [30] Pausan. l. vi. p. 382. & 390.

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writer[31], that this circumstance should have been occasioned by the timidity of the Greeks to mount on horseback; for we learn from Homer, that, even in the most ancient times, they were acquainted with all the feats of dexterity practised by our most accomplished jockies.[32] But before the Persian war, the poverty of the Greeks prevented them from importing foreign horses, and their domestic breed was naturally of an inferior kind to those of Asia and Africa. The Spartans first employed them in battle during their wars with the Messenians. In the Persian expedition, Xerxes tried the mettle of the Persian, against the Thessalian horses, and the former carried off the palm in every contest. For a considerable time after the shameful retreat of that haughty monarch, the Athenians, who then formed the most powerful community of Greece, had a squadron of only three hundred horsemen: and it was not till that ambitious republic had begun to extend her dominion over the inferior states, that she seriously applied to the improvement of her cavalry.

The musical entertainments.

While the Greeks thus acquired the accomplishments of the body, and displayed at Olympia their skill in horsemanship, and their vigour in the gymnastic exercises, the more refined entertainments of the fancy were not neglected; and the agreeable productions of music and poetry added lustre and eloquence to every Grecian solemnity. It is well observed by the only ancient writer to whom we are indebted for

[31] The Chevalier Folard.

[32] Iliad xv. ver. 679.

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an historical account of Grecian music, that the arts of peace, as they are more agreeable and more useful than those of war, demand, in a superior degree, the regard of the historian. If this had been the general opinion of authors, the study of their works would be equally entertaining and instructive. The writer of history would explain the various discoveries which happily tend to improve and to embellish social life; by introducing scenes of gaiety and pleasure, he would diversify the eternal theme of human misery; and while he expatiated on the crimes and calamities of men, he would not neglect to point out the means best adapted to prevent the perpetration of the one, and to soothe the suffering of the other. But the Greek historians have not attempted to afford us this important information; they enlarge copiously on such topics as are adapted to the use of their countrymen; and they preserve the most mortifying silence concerning those subjects which deservedly excite the curiosity of later ages. Of all the arts cultivated by the ingenuity of their contemporaries, music was the most connected with religion, government, and manners; and the effects ascribed to Grecian music are numbered among the most singular as well as the most authentic of all recorded events[38]; yet as

[38] The continual complaints of Plato and Aristotle prove that the music of their age had greatly degenerated from its ancient dignity. It afterwards continued, like all the other arts, gradually to decline; yet, in the second century before Christ, the grave, judicious, and well-informed Polybius ascribes the most extraordinary effects to the Grecian music. Polybius, l. iv. c. 20. et seq.

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to the nature, the origin, the progress, the perfection, in one word, the history of this art, we can know little more than what we learn from the musical treatise of Plutarch, a work extremely short and imperfect, obscure throughout, and in many parts unintelligible.[34]

Why introduced at the public games.

Without much historical information, however, we may venture to explain the introduction of musical entertainments at the four public solemnities. These grand spectacles were destined to exhibit an embellished representation of the ordinary transactions of real life, and while the gymnastic and equestrian exercises represented the image of war, the most serious occupation of the Greeks, music recalled the memory of religion and love, their most agreeable amusements. Besides this, as music in those early times was closely connected with poetry[35], and as the use of composition in prose was not known in Greece till the time of Pherecydes of Syros, and Cadmus of Miletus, who flourished only five hundred and forty-four years before Christ[36], the name of music naturally comprehended all the learning of the age; and to obtain the prize in the musical contests, was equivalent to the glory of being declared superior to the rest of mankind, in mental abilities and endowments.

Extent of Grecian music.

[34] M. Burette, a French physician, has translated this treatise, in the tenth volume of the Memoirs of the Academy, &c. He finds fewer difficulties in it, than present themselves to men far better acquainted with the theory and practice of this elegant art. See Burney on Music, vol. i. p. 36.

[35] The same word signified a song and a poem, a musician and a poet; ωδαι, ασματα; ωδοι, ωδικοι, ασιδοι. Hesych. [36] Strabo, l. i.

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Purposes to which it was applied.

These abilities and endowments were anciently regarded in proportion to their utility. Before the practice of writing was introduced, the history of past events could be preserved only by tradition; and tradition was rendered more sure and permanent by being committed to the safe protection of harmonious numbers.[37] The customary offices of religion were celebrated in poetical composition, and the various hymns appropriated to the worship of particular divinities, were retained by the faithful memory of their respective votaries. The tuneful tribe, who were thus employed to extol the bounty of the gods, to exalt the glory of heroes, and to record and perpetuate the accumulated wisdom of antiquity, condescended also to regulate the duties, and to improve the pleasures of private life. The same bards who taught the men to be brave, exhorted the women to be chaste.[38] Poetry, together with the sister arts of music and dancing, are elegantly called by Homer the chief ornaments of the feast. The poet-musician quelled seditions in states[39], and maintained the domestic quiet of families; while he published laws of the most extensive influence over the whole community, he disdained not to animate the humble but necessary labours of the mechanic; every profession in society, even the

[37] Ως δε ειπειν ὁ πεζος λογος κατασκευασμενος μιμημα τῃ ποιητικῃ εστι· πρωτιστα γαρ ἡ ποιητικη κατασκευη παρηλθεν εις το μεσον.

Strabo, l. i.

[38] Of this we have an example in Homer's Demodicus.

[39] See what is said above of Tyrtæus, p. 188.

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meanest and most vulgar, was encouraged and adorned by its particular song [40]; and the most ordinary transactions of common life, however trivial and low and uninteresting in themselves, were heightened and ennobled by the combined charms of music and poetry.

The degree of perfection in which these arts are found in any country, depends on the language and character of the people by whom they are cultivated. Of this there is abundant proof in the history of ancient, as well as in that of modern nations. The melancholy, stern [41], atrocious, and unrelenting temper of the Egyptians (the supposed instructors of Greece), disqualified that nation either for improving or for relishing the beauties of harmony. The harsh dissonance of the eastern languages, their deficiency in vowels, and the inflexible thickness of their sounds, rendered them but little susceptible of musical composition. The music of the Egyp-

[40] See Athenæus passim, and the discourses on the Greek songs, in the 3d volume of the excellent selection of the Memoirs of the Academy.

[41] The nature of the government furnishes another reason for the imperfection of Egyptian music. Homer characterises Egypt by the epithet πικρος, bitter, to denote the rigid severity of the laws. Among that grave and formal people, the hours of amusement, as well as of business, were prescribed by law. There was a particular time of the day, not only for attending the courts of justice, but for walking, bathing, and even for performing the duties of matrimony. Diodor. Siculus. Poetry, music, sculpture, and all other arts, were regulated by express statute; and, if we may believe Plato, continued invariable for many thousand years. Plato de Legibus. The austerity and restraints of despotism are inconsistent with that flowing freedom of genius necessary to the perfection of poetry.

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tians and Orientals therefore depended rather on the quantity than the quality of sound; and the principal object of their art was rather to rouse the attention by noise, than to charm the soul by melody.

Its origin.

The language and manners of the Greeks were of a different and a far superior kind to those of the neighbouring nations. Hence may be deduced the origin and peculiar excellence of their music, which, though injudiciously[42] ascribed to the invention of Thracians, Mysians, and other barbarous strangers, must have been the natural production of Grecian genius, since the three most ancient modes of music were the Dorian, Ionian, and Eolian, corresponding with the three great divisions of the Hellenic race, and the three principal distinctions of the Hellenic tongue.[43]

Causes of the perfection of the Grecian language and music.

The perfection of language as well as of music, depends on the melody of its sounds; their measure or rhythm; their variety; and their suitableness to the subject which they are meant to describe or to express. The circumstances of the Greeks in the earliest periods of their society[44] rendered them peculiarly attentive to all these objects. They lived continually in crowds; all matters of consequence were de-

[42] While detraction referred the discovery of music to strangers, vanity referred it to the gods; and both accounts serve to prove the great antiquity of the art. Plut. de Music.

[43] We owe the knowledge of this important circumstance to Heraclides of Pontus, the contemporary and scholar of Plato. His words are cited by Athenæus, l. xiv.

[44] See above, chap. ii.

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cided by the voice of the assembly; and, next to the force of his arm, every warrior felt himself indebted to the persuasive accents of his tongue. The perpetual necessity of employing the power of eloquence during the infancy of their political state, made them retain the original tones and cadences by which men, as yet unpractised in the use of arbitrary signs, had made known their affections and their wants. These tones and cadences, imitating the language of action (the first and most natural language of savages), possessed a degree of energy and of warmth which can never be attained by the mere artifice of articulate sounds.[45] By uniting them to these sounds, the Greeks gave all the force of a natural, to an arbitrary sign. Music and action were incorporated in the substance of their speech; and the descriptive power of words was extended to all those objects which can be characterised by sound and motion, or which the various modifications of these qualities can suggest to the mind of man.

A language, thus founded on the broad basis of nature, contained within itself the fruitful seeds of the imitative arts, and the rich materials of all that is *beautiful* and *grand* in literary composition.[46] It is a subject of equal curiosity and

[45] See an excellent discourse of the Abbé Arnaut, on the Greek accents, in the 3d volume of the Choix de Memoirs.

[46] These words very adequately express the ἡδυ and the καλον of Dionysius, de Struct. Orat. The ingenious and philosophical critic ranges under two heads, the qualities of style fitted to please the ear and the imagination. These are the *sweet* and the *fair*. Under the first are contained smoothness, beauty, grace, persuasion,

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importance, to examine how these materials were wrought up, and how these seeds were unfolded. In attempting, with much diffidence, to give some account of this delicate and refined operation, we shall observe the division abovementioned, and consider the *melody*, *measure*, *variety*, and *expression* of the Grecian poetry and music; arts once deemed so intimately connected, that their disjunction at the Pythian games, of which we have already taken notice, was emphatically compared by ancient writers to the separation of the soul and body.

Melody of language.

The pleasure arising from the agreeable succession of sounds depends either on the combination of letters, or on that of musical tones.[47] The attention which the Greek paid to the former, is evident from the whole structure of their language. Wherever propriety permits[48], they always employ full, open, and *magnificent*[49] sounds; innumerable rules of flexion and derivation are founded merely on the pleasure of the ear; and the great principle of the fine arts, to move and affect, without fatiguing the senses, cannot be better illustrated

&c. Under the second, dignity, weight, magnificence, and force. The two kinds of style have a similar relation to each other, which the pleasures of the taste, expressed by the word ἡδυ, have to those of the eye, expressed by καλον.

[47] Dionysius comprehends both under the word μελος, melody.

[48] The το πρεπον, Dionysius observes, may sometimes require harsh, close, and disagreeable sounds.

[49] The μεγαλοπρεπες of Dionysius.

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than by the inimitable composition[50] of elements which characterises the general texture of the Grecian tongue. Whether the ancient poets and orators discovered this composition by investigation, or only preferred it from taste, is a question that may be easily answered, if we reflect, that such a discovery by investigation supposes an acquaintance with the most abstruse principles of philosophy, principles altogether unknown in that early age, during which the composition of elemental sounds attained its highest beauty and perfection. We may therefore without temerity conclude, that sentiment first directed to the practice of those rules which reason afterwards approved; and that this progress equally obtained in the articulation of voice, and the intonation of sound. CHAP. V.

The *latter*, the agreeable composition of which is properly styled melody, was improved to such an extraordinary degree about the time of Homer, as rendered the productions of Olympus, and other ancient poet-musicians, the admiration of all succeeding ages. Unfortunately for the history of the arts, we have not any such analysis of the music of Olympus, as Dionysius of Halicarnassus has left us of the poetry of Homer. We are informed, however, that the ancient me- Melody of Music.

[50] As all languages are relative to the organs of speech, they may all be analized into about twenty-four letters, or elemental sounds, the combination of which forms the wonderful variety of language; a variety resulting from the respective characters and circumstances of different nations.

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lody was not only divided, like the modern, by tones and semitones, but also distinguished by the diesis, or quarter-tone; an interval of which modern musicians rarely make use. The genus of music, regulated by this interval, a genus to which the most powerful effects are ascribed by ancient writers, was known by the name of the enharmonic; the genus, proceeding by semitones, was called the chromatic; and the diatonic, which denotes a progression by tones and semitones, expressed a musical scale nearly resembling that of the modern nations of Europe. [51]

The different genera.

These observations will give the reader an idea of the intervals in the different *genera*, which is all that we can learn on this subject from the learned collection of Meibomius. In none of the musical treatises in that collection do we find any specimen of ancient melody; nor are we enabled, by any circumstance mentioned in them, to ascertain the qualities which formed its principal merit. The invention of the enharmonic genus is ascribed by Plutarch to Olympus, who happening to skip certain intervals in the diatonic scale, observed the beauty of the effect, and the peculiar force and character which the regular omission of the same intervals bestowed on the melody. Upon this observation, he is said to have founded a new

Peculiar effect of the enharmonic genus explained.

[51] It is sufficient to explain the things signified by the enharmonic and diatonic. When, or why, these names were bestowed on the two kinds of music which they respectively denote, is disputed by philologists; and I have not met with any thing on the subject that seemed worthy of being transcribed.

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genus of music remarkable for simplicity, gravity, and grandeur. These qualities might, doubtless, be produced by the happy discovery, seconded by the lofty genius of Olympus; and to them, perhaps, we may refer the enthusiasm and sublimity by which his compositions were distinguished. The employing of the greater intervals supported the dignity and character, while the use of the diesis chiefly contributed to the refinement and delicacy of Grecian music. The bold separation of notes expressed the firmer feelings, and described the stronger emotions of the soul; while the more insensible distinctions of sound painted the innumerable shades and faint fluctuations of passion; as when the voice gradually ascended through the smallest perceptible divisions, it would admirably express the progress of a respectful but ardent affection, unable to hide, yet afraid to reveal its force, and striving by repeated efforts to overcome its natural timidity.

Connection between the melody of language and music.

But by whatever conjectures we may explain the powers of the ancient enharmonic, it appears from the universal consent of Greek writers, that the melody of music and of language differed only in degree, not in kind. The variations of *accent*, for *that* is the proper word to express the melody of language, seldom exceeded, in common discourse, the difference of three notes and a half; which makes Dionysius observe, that it never exceeds the compass of one interval, the diapenté, or fifth. He pretends not, however, that in rhetorical declamation, the flexions of the voice

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CHAP. V.

were so narrowly circumscribed; and it is probable that in poetry, their range was always more extensive than in the most animated prose. When the poet therefore composed his verse, he was obliged to pay an equal attention to accent and to quantity: the acuteness and gravity of sounds, as well as the length and shortness of syllables, contributed to the effect of his art; and each particular word having not only its determined duration, but its appropriated tones, obtained that place in the verse which was felt to be most agreeable to the ear, and best adapted to the subject. The poet therefore naturally performed the office of the musician, and clothed his own thoughts and sentiments with that combination of sounds, which rendered them most beautiful and expressive.

Of quantity and rhythm.

As accent regulated the melody, quantity regulated the rhythm of the ancient music. The most melodious succession of tones, however flattering to the ear, must soon become tiresome and disgusting, when continued without interruption or pause, and undistinguished by such proportions of duration, as are readily seized and measured by the senses. This truth the Greeks illustrated by a comparison. The most brilliant composition of colours is nothing better, they observed, than a gaudy show, dazzling the sight for a moment, but passing afterwards disregarded and unobserved. But to this showy colouring let the painter add the solid beauties of design, and he will convert an empty amusement of the eye, into an elegant entertainment of the fancy.

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What design is to colouring, measure is to melody. It is measure that animates the song, and which, combined with the inimitable charms of Grecian verse, produced those extraordinary effects, which the ignorance and credulity of early ages weakly deemed miraculous. On measure principally depended the different *modes* of music, by which the most opposite passions were alternately excited in the mind; and courage, pride, timidity, love, anger, resentment, successively diffused through a numerous assembly, at the will of a skilful composer. The difference of modes, indeed, arose also, in some measure, from the difference of key; and the same succession of sounds, pronounced with various degrees of acuteness or gravity, may doubtless produce effects more or less powerful: but dissimilar effects it never can produce; so that the grandeur of the Doric, the polished elegance of the Ionic, the soothing sweetness of the Eolic mode[52], must have resulted from the rhythm or measure, which governing the movement of the verse, thereby determined its expression.

Of propriety and expression.

Besides these three modes, formerly mentioned as the original invention of Greece, the natives of that country gradually adopted several others that had been discoved by the neighbouring nations; particularly the Phrygian, consecrated to religious ceremonies; and the Lydian, appropriated to the expression of complaint or sorrow.

[52] Lucian, Harmon. sub initio, et Heraclid. apud Athenæum, l. xiv.

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Of the variety and perfection of Grecian music.

The variety, indeed, at length became greater than can be easily conceived by such as are unacquainted with the mechanism of ancient languages. Every species of verse (and of verse there were above an hundred different kinds) occasioned a change of musical measure, and introduced what, in musical language, may be called a different time. These measures were only to be employed agreeably to the rules of propriety and decorum, which had been discovered in those great principles of nature to which all rules of art must ultimately be referred. A slow succession of lengthened tones expressed moderation and firmness; a rapid inequality of verse betrayed disorderly and ignoble passions; the mind was transported by sudden transitions, and roused by impetuous reiterations of sound; a gradual ascent of notes accorded with all those affections which warm and expand the heart; and the contrary movement naturally coincided with such sentiments as depress the spirits, and extinguish the generous ardour of the soul. Having fixed, with the most accurate precision, the wide variety of *modes* and *genera*, the Greeks seldom confounded them in the same piece, and never applied them to any subject which they had not been originally destined to express. The natural perceptions of taste were gradually strengthened by habit; the principles of music were clearly ascertained, and universally understood; and possessing the warmth and energy of the language of nature, they acquired the perspicuity and ex-

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tent of the language of convention. This is justly deemed the height of musical perfection [53]; and to this height the Greeks had attained, in the beginning of the sixth century before Christ.

[53] The question, whether the Greeks knew music in parts, has been carefully examined by M. Burette (Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions); by Rousseau (Dictionnaire de Musique); and by Dr. Burney (History of Music, vol. i. p. 146, et seq.) These writers, who are so well entitled to decide on this subject, pronounce the Greeks to have been unacquainted with counterpoint. But that their ignorance in this respect did not detract from the perfection, or diminish the effects of their music, may be credited on the unsuspicious testimony of an ingenious Italian. "Il contrapunto, essendo "composito di varie parti, l'una acuta, l'altera grave, questa di "andamento presto, quella di tardo, que hanno a trovarsi insieme, & "ferir l'orecchie ad un tempo, come potrebbe egli muovere mell' "animo nostro, una tal determinata passione, la quale, di sua na-"tura, rechiede un determinato moto, et un determinato tuono?" Algarotti, Saggio sopra l'Opera in Musica.

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CHAP. VI.

The Grecian Bards. — Heroic Poetry. — Change of Manners. — Iambic or Satire. — Elegy. — Tyrtæus, Callinus, Mimnermus. — Life of Archilochus. — Terpander. — Lyric Poetry. — The Nine Lyric Poets. — Sappho, Alcæus, Anacreon, Myrtis, Corinna, Pindar. — Effects of the Sacred Games. — Strength. — Courage. — Contempt of Prejudices. — Taste. — Moral Principles. — Intellectual Powers. — Genius.

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Early perfection of the Grecian music and poetry.

POETRY has described the wonderful effects of Grecian music; and the inimitable excellence of ancient poets can alone render the description credible. Yet the early perfection of these elegant arts, asserted by the gravest writers of antiquity, seems extremely inconsistent with the received doctrines concerning the progress of civil society. Both in the ancient and modern world, the great system of practical knowledge, subservient to the useful purposes of human life, appears to have been slowly raised, and gradually extended, by successive trials, and reiterated efforts. Among savages, scarcely any distinction of professions takes place; the activity of each individual supplies his own wants. During the intermediate stages of society, men are still condemned to a wide variety of occupations; and their attention being distracted by a multiplicity of pursuits, it is impossible that, in any one art,

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they should reach proficiency, or even aspire to excellence. But, contrary to this observation, the Grecian music and poetry are represented as most perfect in their united state; the immortal fathers of verse excelled alike, it is said, in all the various kinds of poetical composition[1]; and their inimitable productions were so far from advancing, by a gradual progress, to perfection, that the most ancient are, by universal consent, entitled to a just preference.[2]

The history of these admired authors is, unfortunately, as uncertain, as their merit was illustrious. The Greeks, possessing much traditionary and little recorded information concerning the antiquities of their country, the great inventors of arts, and generous benefactors of society, have been deprived of their merited fame and well-earned honours. Their names, indeed, like firm rocks resisting the assaults of the ocean, bid defiance to the depredations of time; but of Linus, Orpheus, Musæus, and Melampus, little more than the names remain; and to determine the time in which they flourished, was a matter

[1] We are told by Aristotle, in the 4th chapter of his Poetics, that Homer wrote an iambic poem, intituled Margites, bearing the same relation to comedy and satire, that the Iliad bears to tragedy and panegyric. Notwithstanding the express testimony of the great critic, two very elegant scholars have said, that the hexameter was the only kind of verse known in the time of Homer, the Abbé Arnaut, in his excellent discourse on the Greek accents; and M. Burette, in his Commentary on Plut. de Music.

[2] Græcorum antiquissima quæque scripta vel optima. Horat. Epist. l. ii. ep. 1.

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of as much difficulty two thousand years ago[3], as it remains in the present age.

Since even the chronology of the ancient bards is so extremely uncertain[4], it cannot be expected that we should be able to give a circumstantial account of their life and writings. Instead of considering minutely, therefore, the private history of individuals, a task which suits neither the design of the present work, nor the incredulity

[3] Herodotus, who read his history at the Olympic games 444 years B. C., expresses himself as follows: "Homer and Hesiod lived "about four hundred years ago; not more; and these are the poets "who composed a Theogony for the Greeks; who assigned to the "gods their respective appellations and epithets; distinguished their "several forms, and defined the arts in which they excelled, and "the honours to which they were entitled. As to the poets who "are supposed to have preceded them, I am of opinion that they "flourished in a later age." According to Herodotus, therefore, the age of Homer is fifty years later than it is placed by the marbles of Paros. But on this subject we have surer evidence than any monuments of marble, or even the testimony of Herodotus can afford. The circumstantial minuteness, and infinite variety, which characterise the Iliad and Odyssey, prove their inimitable author to have lived near the times which he describes. He conversed in his youth with those who had seen the heroes of the Trojan war; and, in the vigour of his age, beheld the grandchildren of Æneas, Ulysses, Achilles, and Agamemnon.

Νυν, δε δη Αινειαο γενος Τρωεσσι ανασσει
Και παιδες παιδων τοι κεν μετοπισθε γενωνται. Iliad. xx. ver. 337.

The learned reader may consult the note on the passage in Clarke's Homer, where Dionysius of Halicarnassus is quoted, to prove that the poet says nothing inconsistent with Æneas's voyage into Italy. It is to be observed that the force of the criticism evaporates in Mr. Pope's translation.

[4] The preceding note proves the ignorance of Herodotus, and his contemporaries, concerning the history of their ancient bards; since of these venerable fathers of the Grecian religion and policy, two are mentioned by Homer himself; Linus, in the description of the shield of Achilles, Il. xviii.; Melampus, in the 11th book of the Odyssey, ver. 15.

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of the present age, we shall endeavour to explain the general nature and tendency of their profession, as well as the circumstances which conspired to raise it to that rank and dignity which it long held in society. During the heroic ages, the Grecian poets had much uniformity of character; and if we may depend on the positive assertions of antiquity, the same individual was alike successful in the various branches of his divine art.[5] The earliest poets, therefore, may be represented in one picture, and delineated by the same strokes, until their profession came to be separated into different departments. We shall then distinguish the heroic, iambic, lyric, elegiac, and other kinds of poetical composition; offer some account of the improvers of each particular species; and examine such fragments of their works as deserve attention, not merely on account of their own intrinsic merit, but as genuine and authentic, and indeed the only genuine and authentic transcripts of the manners of that early age in which they were composed.

The Grecian bards.

In ancient Greece, the favourites of fortune were often the favourites of the muses. There remain not, indeed, the works of any Grecian king; but we are told by Homer, that Achilles sung to his lyre the glory of heroes; Amphion, to whose musical powers such wonderful[6] effects are ascribed, reigned in Thebes; the poet Melampus obtained royal authority in Argos; and

[5] There are not any two kinds of poetry more different than those ascribed to Homer by Aristotle, Poetic. chap. iv.

[6] Movet Amphion lapides cendo. Hor.

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Chiron, the wise Centaur [7], though descended of the most illustrious ancestors, and entitled to the first rank among the Thessalian princes, preferred to the enjoyment of power, the cultivation of poetry, and retired, with his favourite muses, to a solitary cavern at the foot of Mount Pelion, which was soon rendered, by the fame of his attainments, the most celebrated school of antiquity. [8]

The musical arts not only excited the emulation of princes, but raised ordinary men to the highest rank in society. By excelling in such accomplishments, Anthes of Bœotia, Olen of Lycia, Olympus of Phrygia [9], obtained the noblest pre-eminence. Nor was it during their lifetime only that they enjoyed the happy fruits of their elegant labours. They were regarded as peculiarly deserving of a double immortality; living for ever in the memory of men, and being admitted, according to the belief of antiquity, to the most distinguished honours in the celestial mansions. [10]

It has been already observed, that the texture of the Grecian tongue was singularly well adapted

[7] Most of the heroes of the Trojan war were his disciples. Xenoph. de Venat. sub initio.

[8] Xenoph. ibid.

[9] M. Burette has collected the most interesting particulars concerning these bards, in his commentary on Plut. de Music.

[10] Musæum ante omnes. Virg. Æn. vi. It is not easy to discover the reason why Virgil, in his Elysium, has placed Musæus before all the rest. This venerable bard, by some called the son, by others the disciple of Orpheus, is universally allowed to have been a native of Attica. The admirer of Grecian eloquence (Orabant Causas melius) intended, perhaps, to compliment the country of Musæus.

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to the improvement of poetry; and this favourable circumstance was admirably seconded by the political condition of the Greeks in the early periods of their society. Religion then was the great or sole principle of government; and the belief of religion was chiefly supported by the Theogonies[11], while its ceremonies were principally adorned by the hymns of the bards. These two kinds of poetry, doubtless the most ancient and the most venerable, formed the main pillars of the political edifice; and the essential parts of this edifice consisting in the praise of the gods, its brightest ornaments were composed of the glory of heroes. The hymns maintained the power of religion, the song animated to valour; and both powerfully affected that peculiar sensibility of temper, and that romantic turn of fancy, the prevailing characteristics of Greece during the heroic ages.

Their influence on society.

Neither the Rüners of the North, nor the Troubadours of Provence, nor the Bards of Germany, nor even the Druids of Gaul and Britain, possessed more distinguished authority than the Aoidoi, or Rhapsodists, of the Greeks. The first requisite of their profession was, to know many soothing tales[12]; and it was the daily object of their art, to delight gods and [13]men. The piety of the priest, and the inspiration of

[11] A Theogony is a poem explaining not merely, as the name denotes, the generation, but also the history of the gods. Most of the ancient poets mentioned in the text wrote Theogonies. Diod. l. iii. Plut. de Music.

[12] Πολλα θελητηρια. HOMER.

[13] Θεοισι και ανθρωποισι αειδειν. HOMER.

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the prophet, were intimately connected with the enthusiasm of poetry; and poets, who had celebrated the glory of the past, were naturally employed to rear the hopes of the future generation.[14] It is probable, however, that the ancient bards had frequent avocations from their literary labours. The curiosity natural to men of genius, would frequently tempt them to visit distant countries. The admiration paid to their abilities could only be upheld by novelty. Both inclination and interest, therefore, would prompt them to sail to foreign lands, to examine their civil and religious institutions, and to converse with their priests and poets, from whom they might derive such information as would enable them, on their return home, to surprise, entertain, and instruct their fellow-citizens.

Their travels.

Of all nations, the Greeks enjoyed most advantages for travelling; and of all Grecian professions, that of the bard. The general diffusion of their national language and colonies, as well as the sacred character with which they were invested, entitled this venerable class of men to expect a secure retreat among the most inhospitable Barbarians. Whatever country they visited, the elegant entertainment derived from their art procured them a welcome reception at religious festivals, and all public solemnities.

[14] In early ages, the education of youth was entrusted only to the first class in society. This profession was exercised in Greece by Homer, as we learn from his life, falsely ascribed to Herodotus, yet certainly very ancient. In Gaul it belonged to the Druids. Vid. Cæsar de Bello Gallico, l. vi.

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Amidst the most dreadful calamities which afflict mankind, the bards alone were exempted from the common danger. They could behold in safety the tumult of the battle; they could witness, undisturbed, the horror of a city taken by storm; calm and serene themselves, they might contemplate the furious conflicts, and wild agitations of the passions. It belonged to them only, and to the sacred character of the herald, to observe and examine, without personal danger, the natural expressions of fear, rage, or despair in the countenances and gestures of the vanquished, as well as the insolent triumph of success, the fury of resentment, the avidity of gain, and the thirst of blood, in the wild aspect, and mad demeanour of the victors. Having considered at full leisure the most striking peculiarities of those agitated and distressful scenes, the poet might retire to his cavern or grotto, and there delineate, in secure tranquillity, such a warm and expressive picture of the manners and misfortunes of men, as should astonish his contemporaries, and excite the sympathetic terror and pity of the most distant posterity.

The respect belonging to their character,

favourable to their poetical studies.

If the Grecian bards were fortunate in observing such events of their own age as best admitted the ornaments of poetical imitation, they were still more fortunate in living at a period which afforded a wonderful variety of such events. Amidst the unsettled turbulence of rising states, the foundation and destruction of cities, the perpetual wars and negotiations of

Peculiar advantages of the age in which they lived.

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neighbouring communities, they were daily presented with subjects worthy the grandeur of the heroic muse. The establisment of colonies, the origin of new superstitions, as well as the imaginary legends which supported the old, furnished copious materials for many a wondrous song. These materials, being eagerly embraced by the choice, were embellished by the fancy of the early bards; who, continually rehearsing them to their contemporaries, had an opportunity of remarking, in their approbation or dislike, the circumstances necessary to be added, taken away, or altered, in order to give to their productions the happiest effect, and the highest degree of strength and beauty. As writing was little practised for the purpose of communicating knowledge, succeeding poets learned to repeat the verses of their predecessors; and, having treasured them in their memory, they adopted them as their own. Frequent repetition, attended with such careful observations as were natural to men whose fame and fortune depended on the success of their art, produced new alterations and amendments [15]; and their performances, thus improving by degrees, acquired that just measure of perfection, to which nothing could with propriety be added, and from which nothing could with propriety be taken away. In this manner, perhaps, the Iliad and Odyssey

The perfection and authority of their works.

[15] Εγεννησαν την ποιητικην εκ των αυτοσχεδιασαντων.
Aristot. Poet. c. iv.

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received the last polish; the harmonious animation of poetry was admired as the language of the gods; and poets, originally the ministers of heaven, the instructors of youth, and the rewarders of merit, were finally regarded as the great establishers of religion, the principal benefactors of mankind, and, as shall be explained hereafter, the wise legislators of nations.

Change of manners, and introduction of iambic, or satire.

As the singular manners and events of the heroic ages naturally produced the lofty strains of the epic muse, so the state of society in Greece, during the immediately succeeding periods, highly favoured the introduction of other kinds of poetry. The abolition of the royal governments gave free scope to the activity and turbulence of democracy; and the rivalships and enmities of neighbouring states, rankling in the minds of their citizens, prepared the imaginations of men for taking a malignant pleasure in works of invective and reproach. The innumerable causes of alienation, hatred, and disgust, which operated also within the bosom of each little republic, opened an inexhaustible source of satire. The competitions for civil offices, for military command, and for other places of trust, profit, or honour, all of which were conferred by the free suffrages of the people, occasioned irreconcilable variance between the ambitious members of the same community, and subjected the characters of men to mutual scrutiny and remark. The sentiments of the Greeks, not being perverted by the habits of slavery, nor restrained by the terrors

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of a despot, they boldly expressed what they freely thought; they might openly declare a just contempt; and while they extolled in the lofty ode and swelling panegyric the heroes and patriots whom they admired, they lashed the cowards and traitors whom they despised, with all the severity of satire.

Elegiac verse.

The ode and satire may be successfully cultivated by imitators in the worst of times; but they could scarcely have been invented and perfected under any other than a popular government. The plaintive elegy, on the other hand, which describes the torments of unsuccessful love, or which paints the affliction of a miserable parent, an affectionate son, a disconsolate wife, or a faithful friend, for the loss of the several objects most dear to their hearts, seems to be the spontaneous production of every soil, and hardly to receive any change of impression from the fluctuating forms of society. The particular purposes, however, to which the Greeks principally applied this species of poetry, appear to have been suggested by their peculiar circumstances at the time of its origin. During the violence and disorder occasioned by the political revolutions, the frequent migrations, and the almost uninterrupted hostilities which succeeded and increased the calamities of the Trojan war, it was natural for those who reasoned concerning the affairs of men, to form, according to the original or acquired bent of their minds, two opposite theories for the best improvement of human life. Men of a firm texture of soul would prepare for the mi-

The purposes to which it was applied naturally suggested by the state of society.

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sery which awaited them, by strengthening their natural hardiness, and fortifying their natural intrepidity. The contempt of pain, and danger, and death, would be the great principle of their lives, and the perpetual subject of their song; and while they described the inevitable disgrace of weakness and cowardice, they would extol, with the most lively sensibility, the glory of valour, the triumphs of success, and the joys of victory. Such themes might delight the martial muse of Tyrtæus and Callinus, but could offer no charms to the effeminate softness of Mimnermus, or to the licentious debauchery of Archilochus. To persons of their character, the calamities of the times, instead of appearing an argument for virtue, would prove an incitement to pleasure. The precarious condition of their lives and fortunes, while it depreciated all other objects, would increase the value of present enjoyment. In the agreeable amusements of the fleeting hour, they would seek refuge against the melancholy prospect of futurity. The pleasures of the table, the delights of love, the charm of the elegant arts and of conversation, would be perpetually studied in their lives, and perpetually recommended in their poetry.

These observations illustrated by the history of Archilochus. Olymp. xv. 3. A. C. 718.

The precious remains of their writings, and still more the authentic circumstances related concerning the characters of the ancient poets, sufficiently confirm the truth of these observations. Next to Homer, Archilochus is the earliest Greek writer, whose life is recorded so minutely as may serve to throw any considerable light on

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the history of his country. We are told by Herodotus [16], that he flourished in the time of Gyges, king of Lydia, who mounted the throne seven hundred and eighteen years before Christ. He was a native of the isle of Paros, one of the Cyclades, which had already become wealthy and populous. His father, Telesicles, must have been a person of distinction, since he was employed to head a deputation of his countrymen to the oracle of Apollo. The object of the Parians was to obtain a favourable answer from the god concerning an enterprise, which they had long meditated, of settling a colony in the valuable island of Thasos, opposite to the coast of Thrace. The oracle approved the design, and in order to reward the respectful behaviour, and to repay the rich presents delivered to the holy shrine by Telesicles, who had unfortunately disgraced the dignity of his rank by an unequal marriage with a beautiful slave named Enipo, declared that the fame of Archilochus, the glorious fruit of this dishonourable connection, should descend to the latest ages of the world.

The prophecy would naturally contribute to its own accomplishment; especially as Archilochus descended from a family in which the love of poetry was an hereditary passion. Tellis, his grandfather, accompanied the priestess of Ceres, in order to establish the Eleusinian mysteries in the isle of Thasos, an employment which, like the sacred commission of Telesicles at the city of

[16] Lib. i. cap. 12.

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Apollo, could not have been exercised by any other than a favourite of the Muses. Enjoying the example of such ancestors, and encouraged by the admonition of the god, it was to be expected that the young poet should second the gifts of nature by the efforts of industry; and that his juvenile productions should soon have been distinguished above those of his contemporaries, by dignity of sentiment, force of expression, and beauty of imagery.

In that martial age, no superiority of genius, rank, or fortune could exempt its possessor from the duty of serving his country in the exercise of arms.[17] The Parian colony in Thasos, having ineffectually endeavoured by its own strength to establish a settlement in Thrace, was obliged, in order to accomplish this design, to have recourse to the assistance of the parent isle. Archilochus served in this expedition, which, though finally successful, was chequered with a great variety of fortune. During an engagement with the barbarous Thracians, in which his countrymen were defeated and put to flight, he saved his life by throwing away his shield; an action so abhorrent, from the military prejudice of the age, that all his eloquence and ingenuity were incapable of extenuating his infamy.

On his return home, he renewed his addresses to a Parian damsel named Neobulé. Her father

[17] This was not the case in the heroic ages; the bards, though called Ηρωες as being of the first rank in society, were exempted from the fatigues of war. Hom. Odyss. passim.

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Lycambes, who had at first granted, afterwards refused his consent, whether disgusted by the unwarlike and therefore despised character of Archilochus, or tempted by the alluring offers of a richer rival. If we believe the poet, it was avarice alone that corrupted the sordid mind of Lycambes; and both he and his daughter, regardless of their plighted faith and repeated oaths, sacrificed their sentiments and character to the mean gratification of this ignoble passion.

This assertion he maintained by his poetical invectives, full of indignation and resentment against the whole family of the supposed traitors. His verses were rehearsed at the public games, where the force and vivacity of the satire were universally admired. Calumny, however, seems to have joined her poisoned darts to the more fair and equitable weapons employed by the anger of disappointed love. Neobulé and her sisters were accused of every vice most inconsistent with the modest dignity of the female character. Yet such an accusation is extremely improbable, considering the reserved circumspection of Neobulé herself, during the ardent solicitations of Archilochus; a behaviour which naturally increased the fire of his passion, and sharpened the edge of his satire.

His reproach and calumny, however ill-grounded and unreasonable, gained an easy credit among the rivals and enemies of Lycambes; and the bitter taunts and invectives, which the malice of the poet had invented, the scornful contempt of the Parians too faithfully retained. An old

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poem was no sooner in danger of being forgotten, than it was succeeded by new verses, couched in the liveliest turns of ingenious satire. The perpetual strokes of malevolence, darted against the family of Lycambes by the persevering cruelty of the poet, rendered their characters suspicious to the public, and their lives painful to themselves. They determined to withdraw from a scene which seemed a constant variation of misery, and died in despair by their own hands.

The poems which produced this melancholy effect, and of which some scattered remains have reached the present times, were written in iambic[18] verse of six and four feet. When the lines were of the same length throughout, the piece was entitled an iambic; and when short and long verses alternately succeeded each other, it was called, from this circumstance, an epode[19]; a name which Horace has given to those performances in which he imitated the poetry and spirit of Archilochus, not copying with servility his sentiments and expression.[20]

[18] The term iambic is synonymous in Greek with the words reproachful, satirical. Arist. Poet.

[19] This word, concerning the meaning of which there have been innumerable disputes, simply denotes the succession of verses or stanzas of different length or structure. In the first sense it is explained in the text; in the second it will be explained in speaking of the ode, of which the epode regularly formed the third stanza, as we learn from Hephestion, Terentianus Maurus, Marius Victorinus, and other ancient grammarians and philologists.

[20] Parios ego primus iambos
Ostendi Latio, numeros animosque secutus
Archilochi, non res, & agentia verba Lycamben.
Epist. lib. i. 19.

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Though iambic was the favourite[21] pursuit of Archilochus, his genius was not entirely confined to that species of writing. Endowed with an extreme sensibility of heart, he was inclined to gratitude and friendship, as well as to enmity and resentment. Animated by the former sentiments, he lamented the death of a kinsman and friend, who had unfortunately perished by shipwreck. The piece consisted of alternate hexameter and pentameter verses, and abounded in elegiac strains, which were admired by the greatest critics of antiquity. The sublime Longinus, in particular, extols the affecting description of the shipwreck; and Plutarch[22] has preserved the conclusion of the piece, in which the poet, having asserted the hurtfulness of sorrow to the living, and its inutility to the dead, determines thenceforth to abstain from unavailing lamentations, and to seek relief for his affliction in wine, love, and other sensual pleasures.

His malignity.

These sentiments of Archilochus seem to prove, that whatever may have been the poetical merit of his elegy, the tender passions were less fitted than the irascible to make a durable impression on his heart. He soon forsook the elegiac muse; and his natural disposition, as well as the fame which he had already acquired by his satires, led him to pursue this species of writing with unabating ardour. The perpetual rivalships and competitions among the principal Parian citizens,

[21] Archilochum propria rabies armavit iambo.
[22] De audiend. Poet.

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who aspired at the first offices of government, frequently degenerating into hatred, malice, and revenge, they observed with infinite delight the aspersions, however foul and false, that were cast on their opponents. The malignity of the public thus nourished and exasperated the venom of the poet; but there was a degree of virulence beyond which it could not with safety proceed. After making the circle of the whole society, and equally offending friends and foes by his excessive and indiscriminate reproach, Archilochus came to be regarded as a public enemy. The licentious impurity of his manners, which bade defiance to every law of decency and of nature, heightened the detestation of his character; and he was compelled to fly in disgrace from his native island, to which his genius would have been an ornament, had his behaviour been less offensive. [23]

Banishment.

Banished from the isle of Paros, the poet sought protection in the Thasian colony, to the establishment of which the services of his father had so eminently contributed; but, unfortunately for his repose, the fame of his satires had gone before him, and the disgrace of having lost his shield in the Thracian expedition was a stain not easily wiped off. His reception among the Thasians, therefore, answered neither his own expectations, nor the liberal spirit of ancient hospitality. He soon quitted a place in which his company was so little acceptable, yet not before

Wanderings.

[23] Critias apud Ælian. Hist. l. ix. c. xiii.

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he had lampooned the principal citizens of Thasos, and with a whimsical and absurd excess of resentment, satirised the narrowness and sterility of the island itself.

Recovers the public esteem at Olympia.

The wandering poet was not more fortunate in several other districts of Greece, in which he took refuge. The warlike Spartans would scarcely admit into their city a writer who had said that a soldier did well to save his person by losing his shield, because he might purchase new armour, but could not recover a new life. Archilochus, thus abandoned, persecuted, and condemned, made one spirited effort for recovering his ancient character and regaining the public esteem. The time approached for celebrating the Olympic festival. The irregularity of his manners, the general detestation of his behaviour as a soldier, and, above all, his avowed vindication of cowardice, should, according to received rules, have excluded him from assisting at that solemnity; but, having removed the prejudices which the citizens of Elis naturally entertained against him, by displaying his wonderful talents for music and poetry, he took care to insinuate that he was possessed of an ode in praise of Hercules, which, if rehearsed before the public assembly, would equally entertain the fancy, and improve the piety of the spectators. The interest of religion being materially concerned in this proposal, the judges of the games thought proper to comply with it. Archilochus appeared on the appointed day among the Olympic bards. After his competitors had given specimens of

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their art in such musical compositions as the audience were accustomed to hear, he began the song in honour of Hercules, accompanied with the sound of his lyre, and written with such new variations of verse, as necessarily occasioned new modulations of melody. It is probable that, on this occasion, he first practised the invention ascribed to him by Plutarch [24], of passing with rapidity from one rhythm, or measure, to another of a different kind. The novelty, the beauty, and the grandeur of his composition, ravished the senses, and elevated the souls of his hearers. The demerit of the performer was obliterated in the perfection of his song. The unanimous applause of the assembly declared his superiority to every rival, and he was immediately rewarded by the prize, and adorned with the crown of victory. [25]

Returns to his native island.

Having acquired such distinguished renown in the public theatre of assembled states, Archilochus returned with exultation to his native country, the glory of which had been proclaimed at Olympia, in consequence of the successful merit of a banished citizen. This proclamation being deemed the highest honour which an individual could procure for his community, the hatred and resentment formerly entertained against the poet was converted into gratitude and admiration.

[24] De Music.

[25] We learn from Pindar and his scholiast, Ode Olym. ix. that this celebrated poem of Archilochus long continued to be sung at the Olympic games, in order to grace the coronation of those victors who either could not afford, or who did not incline, to purchase an ode in their particular honour.

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The renewed respect of his country occasioned many ebullitions of poetical vanity, which evaporated in some verses that have reached the present times.[26] When death put an end to his labours, it served only to heighten his fame. His obsequies were distinguished by every sad circumstance of funeral pomp; and his memory was celebrated by a festival established by the gratitude of his countrymen, and adopted by the general admiration of the Greeks, during which the verses of Archilochus were sung alternately with the poems of Homer[27]: and thus, by a fatality frequently attending men of genius, he spent a life of misery, and acquired honour after death. Reproach, ignominy, contempt, poverty, and persecution, were the ordinary companions of his person; admiration, glory, respect, splendour, and magnificence were the melancholy attendants of his shade.

His singular honours.

History of the lyric poets.

Terpander.

Archilochus was the principal improver, not only of the iambic, but of the graver kind of lyric poetry; and Terpander, who flourished in the same age, was, as far as we can trace the history of the arts, the chief promoter of the gay and festive kinds of lyric composition. This agreeable poet was a native of Lesbos. He obtained the musical prize in the Carnean festival at Sparta; and in the beginning of the seventh century before Christ, gained four successive prizes at Delphi, as appeared by a correct register of the con-

[26] Athenæus, l. xiv. Pausanias, l. x. Stobæus, serm. 123.
[27] Anthol. p. 212. Aristot. Rhetor. l. ii.

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querors in the Pythian games, preserved in the time of Plutarch.[28] These advantages procured him the respect of his contemporaries; but he was honoured by posterity chiefly for his improvement of the lyre, and for the new varieties of measure which he introduced into the Grecian poetry.[29]

The example of Archilochus and [30] Terpander was followed by the nine lyric poets, who, in the course of two centuries, flourished almost in regular succession, and maintained the poetic fame of their country. Of the two most ancient, Alcman and Stesichorus, we have only a few imperfect remains: of Sappho there are two complete odes; her followers, Alcæus, Simonides, Ibycus, and Bacchilides, are known by a few mutilated fragments, and by the remarks of ancient critics; but we still possess many inimitable odes of Pindar, and many pleasant songs of Anacreon.

Sappho, Alcæus, &c.

As to the Grecian lyrists in general, it is worthy of observation, that, except Alcman of Sardis, who on account of his merit was naturalised at Sparta, Pindar of Thebes in Bœotia, and Stesichorus of Himera in Sicily, all the rest were born on the Asiatic coast, or in the islands of the Ægean sea. The soft beauty of these enchanting climates was the best adapted to inspire the rap-

[28] De Music. [29] Euclid. Harmon. Strabo, l. xiii.

[30] Πινδαρος φησι ὁτι των σκολιων μελων Τερπανδρος ευρετηρ εστι. Plut. de Music. "Pindar says that Terpander invented the Scho-"lia," which, according to Pollux and Hesychius, properly denote the drinking songs of the Greeks; but, in a more general sense, signify every kind of lyric poetry not aspiring to the dignity of the ode.

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tures peculiar to the ode, as well as to excite that voluptuous gaiety characteristic of the Grecian song.[31] Amidst the romantic scenes of Ionia was felt with uncommon sensibility the force of that pleasing painful passion, which, uniting grief, joy, and enthusiasm, contains the fruitful seeds of whatever is most perfect in music and poetry.[32] Here the celebrated Sappho breathed the amorous flames by which she was consumed; while her countryman and lover Alcæus declared the warmth of his attachment, excited less perhaps by the beauty of her person, than by the bewitching charms of her voice. But neither Alcæus, who flourished in the beginning of the sixth, nor Anacreon, who flourished in the beginning of the fifth century before Christ, allowed the natural vivacity of their tempers to be overcome by the severities of a passion which they considered chiefly as an instrument of pleasure. When unfortunate in love, they had recourse to wine; and their lively invitations to this enjoyment composed the favourite *airs* of antiquity.[33] Of Alcæus it is usual to judge by the scattered remains of his works preserved in Plutarch[34] and Athenæus[35], and by the high commendations bestowed on him by Horace and Quintilian. The Latin poet, however, seems on many occasions to have

[31] Hippocrat. de Locis, vol. ii. p. 346. Edit. Ludg. Bat.

[32] Agreeably to the principles established by Theophrastus in Plutarch's Symposium.

[33] Give us a song of Alcæus or Anacreon, was a common saying in the age of Socrates. Athenæus, l. x. c. viii.

[34] Sympos. c. vi. [35] Lib. x.

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so exactly imitated, or rather translated the Greek, that the copy will perhaps best enable us to form a complete idea of the original.[36] CHAP. VI.

Alcæus, though he chiefly indulged in the gay and sportive strains of poetry, was yet qualified to undertake more lofty[37] themes; but the whole soul of Anacreon was of that effeminate texture which fitted him only to sing of love and pleasure.[38] Venus, Bacchus, Cupid, and the Graces, were the peculiar divinities whom he adored; and the presents which he offered at their shrine were the most acceptable that any votary could bestow. He not only observed the external rites and ceremonies which they commanded, but proved that his heart and mind had imbibed the genuine spirit of their worship. Throughout the whole of his works now remaining[39], we find the most inimitable simplicity, purity, and sweetness of diction: his Anacreon.

[36] Μηδεν αλλο φυτευσης προτερον δενδρον αμπελου. ALC.
Nullam, Vare, sacra vite, prius severis arborem.
Other translations, equally literal, may be discovered by carefully examining the fragments in Athenæus, l. x.

[37] In lusus & amores descendit, majoribus tamen aptior. QUIN. l. x. c. 1.

[38] Ἁ δαρδιτος δε χαρδιας
Ερωτα μονον ηχει —— ANAC. Od. i.

[39] The works of Anacreon are said, by Petrus Alcyonius de exilio, to have been burned by the Greek priests of Constantinople, from which some learned men, destitute of taste, have absurdly concluded, that the works ascribed to the old poet are spurious. It cannot, surely, be said of those poems, "Etsi excitant animos nostrorum hominum ad flagrantiorem religionis cultum, non tamen verborum Atticorum proprietatem & linguæ Græcæ elegantiam docent;" which is the character that Petrus Alcyonius gives of the compositions substituted by the priests in their place.

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verses flow with a smooth volubility; his images, sentiments, and reasonings (if what in him seems intuitive convictions can be called reasoning) are copied from the warmest impressions of nature. Yet in these poems, otherwise so beautiful and so perfect, there may be discovered an extreme licentiousness of manners and a baneful voluptuousness of fancy, extending beyond the senses, and tainting the soul itself.

Stesichorus.

The dissolute gaiety of Anacreon, the delicate sensibility of Sappho, and the tearful complaints of Simonides[40], were all expressed in that easy equable flow of uninterrupted harmony, which, in the opinion of the most learned of their countrymen[41], displays more grace than strength, and more beauty than grandeur. The majestic muse of Stesichorus soared a loftier pitch. Disdaining the subjects to which the other lyrists descended, he sung of war and heroes, and supported, by his harp, the whole weight and dignity of epic poetry.[42] Such, at least, are the sentiments of a celebrated critic, who had read his works, of which we are at present entitled to

Pindar.

judge only by their resemblance to those of Pindar, who was stamped with a similar form of genius, and treated the same lofty themes.

The honours bestowed on Pindar by his contemporaries, as well as the admiration in which his name was uniformly held by the most improved

[40] Mœstius lachrymis Simonideis. CATULL.

[41] Dionysius Halicarn.

[42] Epici carminis onerâ lyrâ sustinentem. QUINT.

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nations of antiquity, render both his person and his works objects of a very natural curiosity. He was born five hundred and twenty years before Christ, and his long life almost completed the full revolution of a century. His age, therefore, extended beyond the period of history now under our review; yet the works of his predecessors having perished by the ravages of time and barbarism, it is necessary to examine, in this place, the nature and character of the writings of Pindar, as the only materials remaining that can enable us to form a general notion of the performances recited by the lyric poets at the principal Grecian solemnities. Pindar, from his earliest years, was carefully trained by his father (himself a musician) to the studies of music and poetry. His genius, naturally wild and luxuriant, was corrected by the lessons of his fair countrywomen, Myrtis and Corinna[43], whose poetical productions had acquired unrivalled fame, not only in Thebes, but in many neighbouring cities.[44] His first efforts for equalling their renown were displayed at the musical contests celebrated in his native country; where, after conquering Myrtis, he was five times overcome by Corinna, who, could we believe the voice of scandal, owed her repeated victories more to the charms of her beauty than to the superiority of her genius.[45] But in the four public assemblies of Greece, where females were

the admiration in which he was held.

[43] Pausanias, l. ix. c. 22.
[44] Lucian. Ælian. Var. Hist.
[45] Pausan. ibid.

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CHAP. VI. not admitted to contend, Pindar carried off the prize from every competitor. The glory, in particular, which his poetry both gained and conferred at Olympia, made the greatest generals and statesmen of the age court the friendship of his muse. To the temples of the gods, and especially to the celebrated temple of Delphi, his hymns and pœans drew an extraordinary concourse of Greeks and strangers. The priests, prophets, and other ministers of Apollo, sensible of the benefits which they derived from his musical fame, repaid the merit of his services by erecting his statue in the most conspicuous part of the temple, and declared by their organ the Pythia, that Pindar should be honoured with one half of the first-fruit offerings annually presented by the devout retainers of the Delphian shrine.[46] Pindar was thus, during his life-time, associated to the honours of the gods; and, after his death, his memory was adorned by every mark of respect that public admiration can bestow. The beauty of the monument, erected to him by his fellow-citizens in the Hippodrome of Thebes, was admired after the revolution of six centuries.[47] At the Theoxonian festival, a portion of the sacred victim was appropriated, even as late as the time of Plutarch, to the descendants of the poet. The inveterate hostility of the Spartans, when they destroyed the capital of their ancient and cruellest enemies, spared the house of Pindar, which was equally respected in

[46] Pausan. Phocic. [47] Pausan. Bœotic.

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a future age by the warlike and impetuous son of Philip, and the giddy triumph of his Macedonian captains.[48]

Division and nature of his works.

Pindar, we are told, acquired unrivalled fame by his hymns to Jupiter, his pœans to Apollo, and his dithyrambics to Bacchus. But as all these works have perished, as well as his love-verses, his elegies, and his Parthenia[49], we are unfortunately obliged to confine our observations to the odes, which were rehearsed at the sacred games, in praise of the conquerors in the gymnastic and equestrian contests. These conquerors being persons of the first distinction in Greece, the poet takes occasion to celebrate the splendor of their past lives, the dignity of their character, the fame of their ancestors, and the glory of their several republics. The tutelary deities, to whom they owed their felicity, are not forgotten; and hence, by an easy transition, the poet passes to the worship of the god in whose honour the games were established; to the adoration of the heroes by whom they were constituted or confirmed; and to innumerable other episodes, which are often more interesting and more beautiful than the original subject.

Such, most commonly, are the materials of the ode; and its form usually consisted of three stanzas, of which the two first were of an equal length, and either of them longer than the third. This arrangement was introduced as most suitable to the occasion of the poem, as well as to

[48] Polyb. Histor.

[49] Sung, as the word denotes, by a chorus of virgins.

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the scene on which it was rehearsed. The occasion was the solemn sacrifice, accompanied by a public entertainment given to the spectators by the friends of the successful candidate for Olympic fame. Grateful acknowledgments to the gods formed a principal part of the ceremony, which could not, without impiety, be omitted by the victor, who had obtained so honourable a prize through the assistance of his protecting divinity. On the altar of this divinity the sacrifice was performed; and in his temple was sung the panegyrical poem, containing the united praises of the beneficent god and of his favoured votary. The chorus waited, as usual, to begin the song, till the preparations were made for the feast. They repeated the first stanza, properly called strophè, while they gracefully danced, towards the right, round the well-replenished altar; returning, in an opposite direction, to the place from which they set out, they recited the second stanza, therefore called antistrophè; then standing motionless before the altar, and, as it were, in the immediate presence of the divinity with whose statue it was adorned, they sung the concluding stanza, with a richer exuberance, and more complicated variations of melody.[50] The ode, therefore, was distinguished from other pieces of poetry, not by being set to music[51] (for this was common to them all), but

[50] Marius Victorinus de Gram. and the Scholia on Hephæstion.

[51] This error runs through the whole of the otherwise very sensible discourse of Mr. Charbanon on lyric poetry, in the Memoires de l'Academie.

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by being sung by a chorus, who accompanied the various modulations of the voice with suitable movements and attitudes of the body.

His characteristic excellence.

The lyric poetry of the Greeks thus united the pleasures of the ear, of the eye, and of the understanding. In the various nature of the entainment consisted its essential merit and perfection; and *he* only could be entitled the prince of lyric poets, whose verses happily conspired with the general tendency of this complicated exhibition. By the universal consent of antiquity, this poet is Pindar, whom, ever since the eulogium of Horace, critics have extolled for the brilliancy of his imagination, the figurative boldness of his diction, the fire, animation, and enthusiasm of his genius. The panegyrics bestowed on him have generally more of the wildness of the ode, than of the coolness of criticism; so that the peculiar nature of his excellencies may still deserve to be explained. It will be allowed by every one who reads his works with attention, that great as his ideas are, Pindar is not more distinguished by the sublimity of his thoughts and sentiments, than by the grandeur of his language and expression; and that his appropriate and *inimitable*[52] excellence consists in the energy, propriety, and magnificence of his style, so singularly fitted to associate with the lengthened tones of music, and the figured movements of the dance. The uniform cadence, the smooth volubility, and the light unimportance of ordi-

[52] Pindarum quisquis studet *emulari*, &c.

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nary composition, are extremely ill-adapted to this association, which, bringing every single word into notice, and subjecting it to observation and remark, must expose its natural meanness, insignificance, and poverty. But as much as the language of ordinary writers would lose, that of Pindar will assuredly gain by such an examination. His words and phrases are chosen with an habitual care, and stamped with impression of grace and dignity, which, the more they are contemplated, must be the more admired. It is this magnificence of diction, those compound epithets, and those glowing expressions, (which the coldness of criticism has sometimes condemned as extravagant,) that form the transcendent merit of the Pindaric style, and distinguish it even more than the general flow of the versification, which is commonly so natural, free, and unrestrained, that instead of the monotony incident to poetic numbers, it breathes all the richness of the most beautiful and harmonious prose. It is not meant, however, that this great poet paid more attention to the choice, than to the arrangement of words. The majesty of the *composition* equalled, and in the opinion of a great critic, even surpassed the value of the materials. Dionysius, the critic to whom I allude, has explained by what admirable refinements of art, Pindar gave to his words a certain firmness and solidity of consistence, separated them at wide intervals, placed them on a broad base, and raised them to a lofty eminence, from which they darted those irradiations of splendor, that astonished the most distant beholders.

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But the most exalted fame cannot extend with equal facility to distance of time and to distance of place. The poems of Pindar are now deprived of their accompaniments of music and dancing, by which they were formerly ennobled and adorned. They are now read in the retirement of the closet, without personal interest and without patriotic emotion. They were anciently sung to large assemblies of men, who venerated the religion which they described, revered the characters whom they celebrated, and felt the influence of that piety and patriotism which they were admirably calculated to uphold. Such passages as may appear most exceptionable in the cool moments of solitary study, would obtain the highest applause amidst the joyous animation of social triumph, when men are naturally disposed to admire every happy boldness of expression, and to view with unusual rapture, the rovings of those lofty flights which elevate the daring muse of Pindar.

Physical effects of the public games.

In examining the effects of the games as institutions for bodily exercise and mental improvement, it is necessary to reflect, not only on the universality of their establishment, but on the frequency of their repetition. Besides the public solemnities already described, innumerable provincial festivals were celebrated in each particular republic. The Athenians employed near a third part of the year in such amusements; and if we may be allowed to conjecture, that those communities which instituted most festivals, would most excel in the arts and

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exercises displayed in them, we may conclude from the national designations of the Olympic victors preserved in ancient authors, that the number of the Athenian festivals was rivalled by that of several other states.

For these warlike and elegant amusements, the youth were carefully trained by the discipline of the gymnasia, in which they learned whatever can give strength and agility to the limbs, ease and grace to the motions, force and beauty to the genius. Bodily strength and agility were accompanied by health and vigour of constitution. Their athletic hardiness bore, without inconvenience, the vicissitudes of cold and heat. Even in the scorching warmth [53] of July (for that was the season of the Olympic games), they received, bareheaded, but unhurt, the direct rays of the sun: And the firm organization, acquired by perpetual exercise, counteracted that fatal propensity to vicious indulgence, too natural to their voluptuous climate, and produced those inimitable models of strength and beauty, which are so deservedly admired in the precious remains of Grecian statuary.

They produced courage,

These corporeal advantages were followed by a train of higher excellencies to which they are nearly allied. There is a courage depending on nerves and blood, which was improved to the highest pitch among the Greeks. They delight, says Lucian [54], to behold the combats of bold and generous animals; and their own contentions are

[53] Lucian, Solon. [54] In Solon.

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still more animated. In the memorable war with Persia, they shewed the superiority of their national courage: and it is worthy of observation, that the most signal exploits were performed in the field of battle by those who had been previously adorned with the Olympic crown. It was a general boast, that one Grecian could conquer ten Persians[55]; and the suggestions of reason tend to confirm the evidence of history. In the battles of the Greeks and Persians, victory was not obtained by the mechanical exertions of distant hostility. The contest was decided by the point of the sword and spear. The use of these weapons required activity in the limbs, steadiness of the eye, and dexterity of the hand. It improves the courage as well as the vigour of the soldier; and both qualities were admirably promoted by the habitual exercises of the gymnasia, which inspired not only the spirit to undertake, but the ability to execute, the most dangerous and difficult enterprises.

and temperance.

The gymnastic arts promoted other attainments of a nobler nature than bodily accomplishment and courage. Chiefly by *their* influence, the love of pleasure and the love of action, the two most powerful principles in the human breast, were directed to purposes not only innocent but useful. The desire of an Olympic crown restrained alike those weaknesses which form the disgrace, and those vices which form the guilt and misery of undisciplined

[55] Herodot. l. viii.

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minds; and an object of earthly and perishable ambition led to the same external purity and temperance, that is recommended by the precepts, and enforced by the sanctions, of a divine and immutable religion. The oil, the crown, the robes, and the palms compose not the *only* resemblances between the Christian and the Olympic victors. These visible images have been borrowed indeed by the sacred writers, to assist our imperfect conception of divine truths[56]; but they have been borrowed from an institution which resembles Christianity, not in the honours and rewards which it proposed, but in the efforts and duties which it enjoined. The ambition of honest fame[57] taught men to controul the appetites of the body by the affections of the soul; the springs of emulation repressed the allurements of sensuality; one dangerous passion combated another still more dangerous; and a train of useful prejudices supported the cause, and maintained the ascendant, of virtue.

Contempt for the modern notions concerning the point of honour.

Many of the peculiarities which distinguish the Greeks from the mass of ancient and modern nations, seemed to have derived their origin from the same useful institutions; particularly the custom of going unarmed, and their perpetual contempt for the capricious notions concerning the point of honour. These high-minded republicans were accustomed, in the

[56] 1 Corinth. 9th chapter, four last verses.

[57] Qui studet optatam cursu contingere metam,
Multa tulit fecitque puer, sudavit et alsit,
Abstinuit venere et vino.

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private gymnasias and palæstras, as well as at the public games and solemnities, to inflict and to suffer the most provoking indignities. A barbarous Scythian, who witnessed a spectacle that seemed to him as shocking and intolerable as it would appear to a punctilious modern gentleman, declared to his Athenian conductor, that if any one ventured on offering the same insults to him, which the Athenian youths were continually offering to each other, he would soon convince the assembly, that his sword was not an empty ornament of his person, but an useful guardian of his honour.[58] Such were the sentiments of the Scythian; and such, as history attests, are the sentiments of all uncultivated minds. An untutored Barbarian sets no bounds to his resentment. The smallest injury renders his anger implacable; his indignation against the offender being proportioned, not to the nature of *his* offence, but to his own pride, which is boundless. The slightest fault requires the severest atonement; and not only a blow, but a word, or a look, may inflict a stain on the delicacy of his supposed honour, which can only be washed out in the blood of the aggressor. The excesses of this brutish fierceness, before they were corrected by the refinements of Grecian philosophy, were repressed by the habitual practice of the gymnastic exercises. In the schools appropriated to the advancement of these manly arts, the Greeks learned the valuable lesson of repelling

[58] Lucian Anacharsis.

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injuries by others of a similar kind, of proportioning the punishment to the offence, and of thus preventing a slight occasion of animosity from degenerating into a permanent cause of rancorous revenge. If any citizen of those warlike republics had worn armour in times of peace, he must have been regarded either as a madman or as an assassin; for to the chastised principles of Grecian discipline, it would have appeared altogether absurd, that the sword or dagger should be thought necessary to retaliate the reproaches of the tongue, or even the more daring insults of the arm.

Emulation and rewards of the victors.

The entertainments of the public festivals thus tended to eradicate the wild excesses of resentment, and to improve the mild and gentle virtues; but, considered in another view, the same entertainments were calculated to promote ardour, emulation, friendship, patriotism, and all the animated principles and contentions of active life. The rewards bestowed on the conquerors were the most flattering which in that age could be proposed. Odes were sung in their praise; statues were erected to them on the scene of victory; the names of their parents and country were jointly celebrated with their own; they were entitled to the first seats at all public entertainments; maintained at the expence of their respective communities; and, in their native cities, rewarded not only with monuments and inscriptions, but sometimes with altars and temples. Of these honours and rewards, the appropriated symbols were the olive, the pine,

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the parsley, and the laurel crowns; which were respectively distributed to the several victors at Olympia, the Isthmus, Nemea, and Delphi. Observing the small value of these badges of distinction, without adverting to the solid benefits which they conferred, the Persian Tigranes would have dissuaded his master from going to war with a people, who, insensible to interest, fought only for glory.[59] But had Tigranes been more completely informed concerning the institutions of Greece, he would have understood, that both interest and glory operated most powerfully upon the candidates for Olympic fame, and not only their personal interests, but those of their friends, their parents, and their country, who, being associated to their honours, were regarded by them with that fondness of affection which men naturally feel for the objects of their protection and bounty.

Influence of the musical and poetical contests.

In explaining the influence of the Grecian solemnities, we must not forget the musical and poetical exhibitions, which, from being employed to reward the victors in the gymnastic exercises, came to be themselves thought worthy of reward.

The martial lessons of Tyrtæus and Callinus admirably conspired with the effects which have already been described, encouraging the firm and manly virtues, both by the enthusiasm with which their precepts were conveyed, and by the lively impressions which they gave of those objects for which it is important and honourable to contend.

[59] The word is ἀριστης in the original; but here means the reward of virtue. Vid. Herodot. l. viii. c. 26.

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The courage, depending on blood and nerves, is uncertain and transitory in its existence; and even while it exists, may be indifferently employed to purposes beneficial or destructive. It belonged to the martial bards to determine its doubtful nature, to illustrate and enforce its genuine motives, and to direct it unerringly to the proper objects of its pursuit.

They infused a proper mixture of softness and sensibility into the Grecian character.

The musical entertainments thus promoted, refined, and exalted the manly principles inspired by all the customs and institutions of that warlike age. But as bravery is a hardy plant that grows in every soil, the most beneficial consequence of the arts consisted in infusing a proper mixture of softness and sensibility into the Grecian character. This is well known to be their effect in every country where they have been allowed to flourish.[60] The Greeks, in a peculiar manner, required their assistance; nor could it have been possible for that people, without the happy influence of the arts, to control the barbarity naturally occasioned by their constant employment in war, the savage cruelty introduced by the practice of domestic servitude, and that unrelenting ferocity of character which seems essentially inherent in the nature of democratical government. Amidst these sources of degeneracy and corruption, the time and application necessary to attain proficiency in the pursuits of genius, habituated the Greeks to gentle amuse-

Their effects on moral principle,

[60] Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes,
Emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros.

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ments and innocent pleasures. The honours and rewards bestowed on the successful candidates for literary fame, engaged them to seek happiness and glory in the peaceful shade of retirement, as well as on the contentious theatre of active life; and the observations and discoveries occasionally suggested by the free communication of sentiment, strengthened and confirmed those salutary maxims which combat on the side of virtue, and maintain the practice of such rules of behaviour as are most useful and agreeable in society.

and on the intellectual powers,

If the musical and literary entertainments acquired such an happy influence over the moral dispositions of the heart, they produced a still more considerable effect on the intellectual faculties of the mind. It is almost impossible, in the present age, to conceive the full extent of their efficacy in improving the memory, enriching the imagination, and correcting the judgment. As to the memory, indeed, there is a period in the progress of society preceding the introduction of writing, when the energies of this faculty have been exerted among many nations with a wonderful degree of force. Even among the barbarous Celtic inhabitants of our own island, the Druids could repeat an incredible number of verses, containing the knowledge of their history, laws, and religion; and a period of twenty years was required to complete the poetical studies of a candidate for the priesthood. [61]

[61] Cæsar, de bello Gallico, l. vi. cap. 13.

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prepared the Greeks for their high attainments in eloquence and philosophy.

But if the Greeks were equalled by other nations in the power of memory, they have always been unrivalled in the delicacy of their taste, and the inimitable charms of their fancy. These excellencies, whether originally produced by natural or moral causes, or more probably by a combination of both, were, doubtless, extended and improved by emulation and habitual exercise. To this exercise the public solemnities afforded a proper field; and, in the contests of music and poetry, were displayed the opening blossoms of Grecian genius, blossoms which afterwards ripened into those fruits of philosophy and eloquence, that will form the admiration and delight of the last ages of the world.

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State of the Grecian Colonies.—The Ionians flourish in Arts and Arms.—Their Wars with the Lydians.—The Asiatic Greeks subdued by Crœsus.—Splendour of the Lydian Court.—Foundation of the Persian Monarchy.—Causes of its rapid Grandeur—Which alarms Crœsus.—His Alliance with the Lacedæmonians.—He invades the Persian Dominions.—Measures of his Allies.—Crœsus defeated by Cyrus.—End of the Lydian Monarchy.

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State of the Greek colonies in Europe and Africa. Olymp. XX. 1. A. C. 700.

ABOVE two thousand years have elapsed since it was observed, to the honour of Europe, that a handful of Greeks having established themselves in Asia and Africa, continually maintained and extended their possessions in those quarters of the world.[1] Wherever the spirit of enterprize diffused their settlements, they perceived, it is said, on the slightest comparison, the superiority of their own religion, language, institutions, and manners; and the dignity of their character and sentiments eminently distinguished them from the general mass of nations whose territories they invaded, and whom they justly denominated Barbarians.[2] Yet these honourable

[1] Hippocrat. vol. i. p. 350. edit. Lugdun. 1763.

[2] Isocrat. Panegyr. passim.

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advantages, instead of conciliating good-will, tended only to exasperate hostility. The northern Greeks were perpetually harassed by the fierce inroads of the Thracians: the southern were endangered by the united strength of Egypt and Lybia. The colonies in Magna Græcia having easily resisted the rude, though warlike natives of that country, were called to contend with the more formidable power of Carthage. But the consequences of all these wars, which shall be described in due time, extended not beyond the countries in which they first arose. The memorable conflict between the Greek colonies in the East, and the great nations of Asia, forms a subject more vast and more interesting. Not confined to the extremities, it reached and shook the centre of Greece. It recoiled with more destructive violence on Persia; its duration comprehends the most illustrious period in the history of both countries; and its extent embraces all the great nations of antiquity, together with the scattered communities of Grecian extraction in every part of the world.

State of the Greek colonies in Asia.

In the third century after their establishment in the East, and above seven hundred years before the Christian æra, the Greeks of Asia, and particularly the Ionians, far surpassed their European ancestors in splendor and prosperity.[3] While ancient Greece was harassed by intestine dissensions, and its northern frontier exposed to the hostility of neighbouring Barbarians, the eastern

[3] Herodot. passim. Plin. l. v. & Senec. ad Helv.

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colonies enjoyed profound peace, and flourished in the vicinity of Phrygia and Lydia, the best cultivated and most wealthy provinces of Lower Asia [4], and perhaps of the ancient world. History and poetry alike extol the golden treasures of the Phrygian and Lydian kings.[5] Their subjects wrought mines of gold, melted the ore, moulded figures in bronze, dyed wool, cultivated music, enjoyed the amusements of leisure, and indulged the demands of luxury[6], when the neighbouring countries of Cappadocia and Armenia remained equally ignorant of laws and arts, and when the Medes and Persians, destined successively to obtain the empire of Asia, lived in scattered villages, subsisted by hunting, pasturage, or robbery, and were clothed with the skins of wild beasts.[7]

They engross the commerce of Lydia, Phrygia, and Egypt.

Yet the Lydians and Phrygians, satisfied with their domestic advantages, seem never to have directed their attention towards foreign commerce.[8] When the voluptuousness or ostentation of their kings and nobility made them covet

[4] Strabo, l. xii. and l. xiii.

[5] Idem. p. 628. & 621. edit. Paris.

[6] Herodot. l. i. c. xciv. Plin. l. vi. c. lvi.

[7] Herodot. l. i. c. lxxi. Conf. Isocrat. Panathen.

[8] The Lydians and Phrygians are mentioned, in Castor's Epochs, among the seventeen nations who, according to that careless and ignorant compiler, successively became masters of the Mediterranean sea; but the extravagant dreams of this fabulous writer are at variance with the whole tenor of ancient history. It is extraordinary that those who ever looked into Herodotus should pay any regard to the unwarranted assertions of Castor; yet this fabulist has been generally followed by modern chronologers and compilers. See BLAIR's Tables, &c.

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the conveniences and luxuries of distant countries, they were contented to owe these new gratifications first to the Phœnician merchants, and afterwards to the Greek settlements established on their coasts. Through the supine neglect of their neighbours respecting maritime affairs, the Asiatic Greeks acquired without contest, and enjoyed without molestation, besides several valuable islands, the whole western coast of the continent, extending, in a waving line, above six hundred miles in length, beautifully diversified by hill and dale, intersected by rivers, broken by bays and promontories, and adorned by the noblest prospects and finest climate in the world. The face of that delightful country will be more particularly described, when it becomes the unhappy scene of military operations. It is sufficient at present to observe, that its Ionian inhabitants, possessing the mouths of great rivers, having convenient and capacious harbours before them, and behind, the wealthy and populous nations of Asia, whose commerce they enjoyed and engrossed, attained such early and rapid proficiency in the arts of navigation and traffic, as raised the cities of Miletus[9], Colophon[10], and Phocea[11], to an extraordinary pitch of opulence and grandeur. Their population increasing with their prosperity, they diffused new colonies every where around

[9] Athenæus, l. xii. p. 523. Comparing their ancient and actual state, the Greek proverb said, Παλαι ποτε μεν αλκιμοι Μιλησιοι: Once, but long ago, the Milesians were powerful.

[10] Athen. l. xiv. p. 643.

[11] Strabo, p. 582. & p. 647. Herodot. l. iv. c. clii.

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them. Having obtained footing in Egypt[12], in the eighth century before Christ, they acquired, and thenceforth preserved, the exclusive commerce of that ancient and powerful kingdom. Their territories, though in their greatest breadth compressed between the sea and the dominions of Lydia to the extent of scarce forty miles, became not only flourishing in peace, but formidable in war[13], and bore something of a similar relation to the powerful kingdoms of Egypt, Lydia, and Assyria, which had hitherto swayed the politics of the ancient world, that the small but industrious republics of Italy maintained towards the rest of Europe in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: or, to describe their condition still more exactly, that the Netherlands, three hundred years ago, maintained towards the extensive countries of France, England, and Germany.

Improved the arts which they had learned in those countries.

Such multiplied advantages could not languish in the hands of men, who, as we shall soon learn from their history, had genius to conceive, and courage to execute, the most arduous designs. With the utmost industry and perseverance they improved and ennobled the useful or elegant arts, which they found already exercised among the Phrygians and Lydians. They incorporated the music of those nations with their own. Their poetry, as above described, far excelled whatever Pagan antiquity could boast most precious.[14]

[12] Herodot. l. ii. c. cxxxii.

[13] Idem. ibid. & Aristot. de Civitat. l. iv. c. iv.

[14] See chap. vi.

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They rivalled the skill of their neighbours in moulding clay, and casting brass. They appear to have been the first people who made statues of marble. The Doric and Ionic orders of architecture perpetuate in their names the honour of their inventors. Painting was first reduced to rule, and practised with success among the Greeks; and we may be assured that, during the seventh century before Christ, the Ionians surpassed all their neighbours, and even the Phœnicians, in the arts of design, since the magnificent presents which the far-famed oracle of Delphi received from the ostentation or piety of the Lydian kings, were chiefly the productions of Ionian artists.[15] In the following century Ionia gave birth to philosophy; and we shall have occasion to explain hereafter by what means both science and taste were diffused from that country over Greece, Italy, and Sicily. But our present subject recalls us from the history of arts to that of arms.

Invent others peculiar to themselves.

Incursion of the Cimmerians.

The first formidable enemies with whom the Asiatic Greeks had to contend, were the barbarous Cimmerians[16], who, being driven from the banks of the Euxine, by a Scythian horde still fiercer than themselves, overflowed with resistless violence the finest provinces of Asia Minor. But

[15] Herodot. l. i.

[16] Strabo, p. 292. says, that the Cimmerians were called Cimbri by the Romans. He speaks frequently of them, particularly pp. 108. 193. 292. 494. Their impetuous and destructive incursions are well expressed by the elegiac poet Callinus, cited in Strabo, p. 648.

Νυν δ' επι Κιμμεριων στρατος ερχεται οβριμοεργων.

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the invasion of the Cimmerians is described as a predatory incursion[17], not as a regular plan of enterprise directed to the purposes of conquest and settlement. The hurricane soon spent its force; the Greeks recovered from the terror inspired by these desultory ravagers, and, within a few years after their departure, the Ionian and Etolian colonies, who seem to have carried their ancient enmity into their new acquisitions, totally forgot their recent and common danger, and engaged in cruel domestic wars.

Domestic dissensions,

These unnatural dissensions were repressed by the growing power of the Lydians, which, extending itself on all sides, finally reduced the greatest part of Lesser Asia, a country once affording the materials of many rich and flourishing kingdoms, but now reduced to beggary and barbarism under the oppressive yoke of Turkish tyranny. The territory of Lydia, which extended its name with its authority from the river Halys to the Ægean, and from the southern shore of the Euxine to the northern coast of the Mediterranean, was anciently confined to that delightful district situate at the back of Ionia, watered on the north by the river Pactolus, famous for the golden particles[18] intermixed with its sand, and on the south by Cayster, whose banks, frequented by swans, have afforded one of

interrupted by the growth of the Lydian power. Olymp. xv. 3. A. C. 718.

[17] Ου καταστροφη εγενετο των πολιων αλλα εξ επιδρομης αρπαγη. HERODOT.

[18] They were washed down from Mount Tmolus, the gold of which was exhausted in the time of Strabo. Vid. Strabo, l. xiii.

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the most beautiful comparisons in the Iliad.[19] The kingdom of Lydia was anciently subject to a race of princes[20], styled Atyatidæ, from the heroic Atys, the great founder of their house. To the family of Atys succeeded that of Hercules, which had obtained sovereignty in Lydia before the war of Troy, and continued to reign five hundred and five years, till their honours expired in the unhappy Candaules. The story of Candaules, of his beautiful wife, and of his fortunate servant, has been adorned by the father of history with the inimitable charms of his Ionic fancy. The vain, credulous prince, injudiciously displaying the beauty, offended the modesty of his injured spouse. Gyges[21], the most favoured of her husband's attendants, to whom his weak master had prostituted the sight of her naked charms, was involuntarily employed as the instrument of her resentment. To reward him for taking away the life of Candaules, he was honoured with the hand of the queen, and from the rank of captain of the guards, advanced to the throne of Lydia.

Gyges makes war on the Ionians.

This revolution, which happened seven hundred and eighteen years before Christ, was felt by the neighbouring nations, who soon discovered

[19] Καυτρις αμφι ρεεθρα, &c. Iliad ii. ver. 460. and Pope, ver. 540.

[20] Herodotus, l. i. throughout, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, l. i. c. 27. et seq. furnish the principal materials for the history of Lydia.

[21] Herodotus was unacquainted with the wonderful story of Gyges's ring, which had the power of rendering him invisible, by means of which he was enabled to kill his master, and usurp his throne. Plato, l. ii. de Repub.

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in the enterprising character of Gyges, the difference between adventurers who acquire, and princes who inherit, a crown. The Ionian cities of Asia offered a tempting prize to the valour of Gyges, and the valuable mines[22] discovered between the cities Atarneus and Pergamus, as well as the gold obtained from the river Pactolus[23], enabled him to hire such a number of troops as seemed necessary to accomplish his ambitious designs. The citizens of Miletus and Smyrna were harassed by a long war; but of all the Ionic settlements, Colophon alone submitted to his arms.

Takes Colophon. Olymp. xxv. 1. A. C. 680.

Ardys, his successor, following the military example of Gyges, stormed the city of Prienè, and invaded the territories of the Milesians. He transmitted his enmity against that people to his son Sadyattes, from whom it descended to his more warlike grandson. Alyattes, grandson of Ardys, annually invaded the country of Miletus, cut down the trees, burnt the standing corn, ravaged and desolated the whole territory. The houses he allowed to remain entire, that the Milesians, governed by that powerful attachment which binds men to their ancient habitations, might return thither after his departure, and again apply to the sowing and cultivation of the ground, the fruits of which he was determined

The war continued by his successors. Olymp. xl. 2. A. C. 619.

[22] Strabo, l. xiii. p. 625.

[23] Strabo, p. 680. The wealth of Gyges was proverbial in the time of Anacreon:

Ου μοι μελει Γυγαο
Τε Σαρδιων ανακτος, &c.

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next harvest to destroy. In this manner he continued, during eleven years, to harass, but was unable to conquer, the Milesians. The inhabitants of the country retired at his approach, and shut themselves up in their capital, the walls of which bid defiance to his assaults; nor was it possible to reduce by blockade a city that had long been, and still continued, mistress of the sea. But Alyattes persisted in distressing those whom it seemed impossible to subdue; and he was carrying on his twelfth autumnal incursion with fire and sword, when an unforeseen accident occasioned a speedy termination of the war.

An unforeseen event puts an end to the war. Olymp. xliii. 2. A. C. 607.

The beautiful territory of Miletus was, according to annual custom, thrown into a blaze, and the flames of the standing corn, impelled by the violence of the wind, communicated with the temple of Assesian Minerva. That sacred edifice was burnt to the ground. Alyattes, who was attended on his march by pipes, harps, and flutes, adapted to the voice both of men and of women, did not immediately consider, amidst the noise of festivity and the parade of military triumph, the fatal consequences of this enormous impiety. But falling sick soon after at Sardis, he had leisure, during the quiet and solitude of his distemper, to reflect on the horror of his crime; and prying into futurity with that anxious solicitude which usually attends guilt, he dispatched messengers to the temple of Delphi, to consult the Grecian god concerning the means of mitigating the distress of his present uneasy state of mind. Apollo refused giving an

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answer to his petition, unless he should rebuild the temple of Minerva. The Lydian prepared to comply with this condition, and immediately sent ambassadors to Miletus, to propose a suspension of arms until the great work shall be completed. That city was then governed by Thrasybulus, who, by one of those revolutions not unfrequent in the Grecian republics, had attained the rank of tyrant [24], as it was then called, in a state usually subsisting under the form of a democratical community. Similarity of views and dispositions had introduced a friendly connection between Thrasybulus and the celebrated Periander of Corinth, who was no sooner acquainted with the advice of Apollo, than he sent immediate intimation of it to the Milesian prince, counselling him at the same time to avail himself of the present conjuncture to promote the interest of his country. In compliance with this advice, Thrasybulus employed an expedient equally singular and successful. When the Lydian ambassadors arrived at Miletus, they expected to behold a city in distress, not only destitute of the accommodations and luxuries, but ill provided with the chief necessaries of life. But their surprise was extreme, to observe vast magazines of corn open to public view, to perceive an extraordinary

[24] In the strict sense, τυραννος means him who has acquired sovereignty in a free republic. The word has no relation to the abuse of power, as in the modern acceptation. Thrasybulus of Miletus, Periander of Corinth, Pisistratus of Athens, Polycrates of Samos, Alexander of Pheræ, and Dionysius of Syracuse, were all called τυραννοι, though their characters were as widely different as those of Titus and Domitian, the extremes of virtue and vice.

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abundance of all other fruits of the ground; and to behold the inhabitants revelling in fulness and festivity, as if their country had never suffered the cruel ravages of an invader. This appearance of ease and plenty was exhibited by the contrivance of Thrasybulus, by whose command the corn and other provisions had been carried from private magazines into the streets, that the Lydians, returning to Sardis, the usual residence of their prince, might acquaint him with the prosperous condition of a people, whom it had been the great object of his reign to afflict and to annoy. Alyattes was much affected by the intelligence, and at length consented to a peace with the Milesians on honourable terms. To compensate for his past injuries and impiety, he promised to dedicate to Minerva two new edifices, the magnificence of which should far surpass the splendor of her ancient temple. The promise was performed, the new temples were consecrated, Alyattes recovered from his distemper, and peace subsisted for a short time between the two nations.

Happy reign of Alyattes.

The long reign of Alyattes, which, if we may credit the doubtful evidence of ancient authors in matters of chronology, lasted fifty-two years after the treaty with Miletus, was not chequered with any great variety of fortune. He conquered, indeed, the city and small territory of Smyrna, a Grecian settlement then in its infancy, but which was destined afterwards to become, by its happy situation for commerce, the most wealthy and populous establishment in those parts, and to be

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styled, in the pompous language of inscription, the ornament of Ionia, the first and chief city of the Asiatic coast.[25] His arms were equally successful in repelling the destructive invasions of the Scythian hordes, who ravaged the northern parts of his dominions, and in resisting the dangerous ambition of the Medes, the most powerful nation of Upper Asia. Satisfied with these advantages, Alyattes became unwilling to commit his future fortune to the vicissitudes of war. Fixed in this purpose, he spent his remaining days amidst the happiness of his wealth and grandeur, in contemplating the various stages of his prosperity, in listening to the flattery of his courtiers, in receiving the grateful homage of his subjects, and in enjoying that pomp and pleasure which usually surround an eastern throne. CHAP. VII.

This fortunate prince was succeeded five hundred and sixty-two years before Christ, by his son Crœsus, whose uninterrupted prosperity, in the first years of his reign, far eclipsed the glory of all his predecessors. But the splendor of Crœsus was that of a passing meteor, which dazzles for a moment, and disappears for ever. Of all the kings of Lydia, he was the greatest conqueror, but he was also the last king of that country[26], as well as the last prince of his family. Under various unjust pretences he attacked the Grecian cities of Asia Minor, which being undisturbed by foreign war, The war renewed by Crœsus; Olymp. lib. 3. A. C. 562.

[25] Marm. Oxon.

[26] Lydia descended to the rank of a province, as will appear below.

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had unfortunately engaged in domestic dissensions. While jealousy hindered the Greeks, ignorance prevented the Barbarians from forming a confederacy sufficient to resist the Lydian power. The Carians, Mysians, and Phrygians, fighting singly, were successively subdued; and the whole peninsula of Lesser Asia (except only the little territory of the Lycians and Cilicians), extending eastward as far as the river Halys, and inhabited by three nations of Grecian, and eleven of Barbarian extraction [27], finally acknowledged the power of Crœsus, and tamely received his commands.

who subdues the Asiatic Greeks, as well as the neighbouring nations.

Having met with such extraordinary success by land, the Lydian prince determined to render his power equally conspicuous by sea. For this purpose, he thought seriously of equipping a fleet, with which he purposed to invade and conquer the Grecian islands directly fronting his dominions. But this design, which, considering the slow progress in maritime power among the nations most diligent to attain it, would probably have failed of success, was prevented by the advice of a philosophical traveller, conveyed in such a lively turn of wit, as easily changed the resolution of the king. Bias of Prienè, in Ionia, some say Pittacus of Mitylenè, in the isle of Lesbos, while he travelled, after the Grecian custom, from curiosity and a love of knowledge, was presented to Crœsus at the Lydian court; and being asked by that prince what news from

He is diverted from his design of raising a naval power.

[27] The Phrygians, Mysians, Mariandynians, Chalybians, Lydians, Paphlagonians, Thracians, Bithynians, Carians, and Pamphylians.

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Greece? he answered with a republican free- CHAP. VII.
dom, that the islanders had collected powerful squadrons of cavalry, with an intention of invading Lydia. "May the gods grant," said Crœsus, "that the Greeks, who are unac- "quainted with horsemanship, should attack the "disciplined valour of the Lydian cavalry; there "would soon be an end to the contest." "In "the same manner," replied Bias, "as if the "Lydians, who are totally unexperienced in "naval affairs, should invade the Grecians by "sea." Struck by the acuteness of this unexpected observation, Crœsus desisted from his intended expedition against the islands; and instead of employing new means for extending his conquests, determined peaceably to enjoy the laurels which he had won, and to display the grandeur which he had attained.

His court was the gayest and most splendid of any in that age; and the Asiatic Greeks, whatever dishonour they incurred, sustained not, perhaps, any real loss by their easy submission to a vain and weak man, but a magnificent and liberal prince[28], who was extremely partial to their country. They acknowledged the conqueror, indeed, by a very moderate tribute, but they enjoyed their ancient laws, and administered without controul their domestic concerns and govern- The splendor of Crœsus's court.

[28] Such is the character which results from considering the conduct of Crœsus. The transactions of his reign will not warrant our adopting the admirable panegyric of him by Pindar (Pyth. i.):

Ου φθονει Κροισῳ φιλοφρων αρετη, &c.

He was taught wisdom late, and only by adversity.

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ment.[29] Crœsus spoke their language, encouraged their arts, admired their poets and *sophists*. Ionia, perhaps, was[30] never more happy than under the eye of this indulgent master, whose protection nourished the tender shoot of philosophy, which had begun to spring up shortly before his reign. Thales of Miletus, Pittacus of Mitylené, Bias of Prié né, Cleobulus of Lindus, and the other wise men, as they are emphatically styled, who lived in that age, not only gave advice and assistance to their countrymen in particular emergencies, but corrected their vices through wholesome laws, improved their manners by useful lessons of morality, and extended their knowledge by important and difficult discoveries. We shall have occasion hereafter to consider more fully the improvements made by those ancient sages, who are said to have maintained a correspondence with each other, as well as with Chilon of Sparta, Periander of Corinth, and Solon of Athens, men who acquired such reputation by their practical wisdom, as rendered them the oracles of their respective countries. Most of these, as well as Æsop the fabulist, and the elegant Greek poets of the times, were bountifully received at the court of Crœsus. There is still on record a memorable conversation between that prince and Solon, which seemed to predict the subsequent events of his reign, and which had a late but important influence on the character and fortune of the Lydian king.

Condition of the Asiatic Greeks under his government.

[29] Herodot. [30] Thucydid.

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His conversation with Solon.

Crœsus having entertained his Athenian guest, according to the ancient fashion, for several days, before he asked him any questions, ostentatiously shewed him the magnificence of his palace, and particularly the riches of his treasury. After all had been displayed to the best advantage, the King complimented Solon upon his curiosity and love of knowledge; and asked him, as a man who had seen many countries, and reflected patiently and acutely upon what he had seen, whom of all men he esteemed most happy? By the particular occasion, as well as the triumphant air with which the question was proposed, the King made it evident that he expected flattery rather than information. But Solon's character had not been enervated by the debilitating air of a court, and he replied with a manly freedom, "Tellus, the Athenian." Crœsus, who had scarcely learned to distinguish, even in imagination, between wealth and happiness, inquired with a tone of surprise, why this preference to Tellus? "Tellus," rejoined Solon, "was not conspicuous for his riches, or his grandeur, being only a simple citizen of Athens; but he was descended from parents who deserved the first honours of the republic. He was equally fortunate in his children, who obtained universal esteem by their probity, patriotism, and every useful quality of the mind or body; and as to himself, he died fighting gallantly in the service of his country, which his valour rendered victorious in a doubtful combat; on which account the Athenians buried him on the spot where he fell, and distin-

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guished him by every honour which public gratitude can confer on illustrious merit."

Crœsus had little encouragement, after this answer, to ask Solon, in the second place, whom, next to Tellus, he deemed most happy? Such, however, is the illusion of vanity, that he still ventured to make this demand, and still, as we are informed by the most circumstantial of historians, entertained hopes of being favourably answered. But Solon replied with the same freedom as before, "The brothers Cleobis and Biton; two youths of Argos, whose strength and address were crowned with repeated victory at the Olympic games; who deserved the affection of their parents, the gratitude of their country, the admiration of Greece; and who, having ended their lives with peculiar felicity[31], were commemorated by the most signal monuments of immortal fame." "And is the happiness of a king, then," said Crœsus, "so little regarded, O Grecian stranger! that you prefer to it the mean condition of an Athenian or Argive citizen?" The reply of Solon justified his reputation for wisdom. "The life of man," said he, "consists of seventy years, which make twenty-six thousand two hundred and fifty days; an immense number, yet in the longest life, the events of any one day will not be found exactly alike to those of another. The affairs of men are liable to perpetual vicissitudes; the Divinity who presides over our fate is envious of unvaried prosperity; and all human life,

[31] Τελευτη τε ζωη αριστη επιγενετο. Herodot. l. i. c. 31.

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if not condemned to calamity, is at least liable to accident.[32] Whoever has uninterruptedly enjoyed a prosperous tide of success may justly be called fortunate; but he cannot before his death be entitled to the epithet of happy."

Crœsus affected by the loss of his son Atys.

The events which soon followed this conversation, prove how little satisfaction is derived from the possession of a throne. Victorious in war, unrivalled in wealth, supreme in power, Crœsus felt and acknowledged his unhappiness. The warmest affections of his soul centered in his son Atys, a youth of the most promising hopes, who had often fought and conquered by his side. The strength of his attachment was accompanied with an excess of paternal care, and the anxiety of his waking hours disturbed the tranquillity of his rest. He dreamt that his beloved son was slain by a dart; and the solicitude with which he watched his safety, preventing the youth from his usual occupations and amusements, and thereby rendering him too eager to enjoy them, most probably exposed him to the much-dreaded misfortune. Reluctantly permitted to engage in a party of hunting, the juvenile ardour of Atys, increased by the impatience of long restraint, made him neglect the precautions necesary in that manly amusement. He was slain by a dart, aimed at a wild boar of monstrous size, which had long spread terror over the country of the Mysians. The weapon

[32] Ουτω ων ω Κροισε πας εστι ανθρωπος συμφορη. The last word is improperly explained in all the translations that I have met with.

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came from the hand of Adrastus, a Phrygian prince and fugitive, whom Crœsus had purified from the involuntary guilt of a brother's blood, and long distinguished by peculiar marks of bounty. To the grateful protection of the Phrygian, Crœsus recommended, at parting, the safety of his beloved son. A mournful procession of Lydians brought to Sardis the dead body of Atys. The ill-fated murderer followed behind. When they approached the royal presence, Adrastus stepped forward, and entreated Crœsus to put him to death; thinking life no longer to be endured after killing first his own brother, and then the son of his benefactor. But the Lydian King, notwithstanding the excess of his affliction, acknowledged the innocence of Adrastus, and the power of fate. "Stranger, your action is blameless, being committed without design. I know that my son was destined to a premature death." Adrastus, though pardoned by Crœsus, could not pardon himself. When the mourners were removed, he privately returned, and perished by his own hand on the tomb of Atys.

Roused from his inactivity by the growing power of Persia.

Two years Crœsus remained disconsolate for the loss of his son, and might have continued to indulge his unavailing affliction during the remainder of life, had not the growing greatness of Persia, which threatened the safety of his dominions, roused him from his dream of misery. That country was anciently confined to a small part of the immense region at present known by the Persian name. Its inhabitants had recently become formidable, and in the course of a few

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years, under Agradatus, afterwards called Cyrus[31], they extended their conquests over Upper Asia, overturned the power of Crœsus, enslaved the Greeks of Asia Minor, and, for the first time, threatened Europe with the terrors of Asiatic despotism. This memorable revolution deserves not only to be examined in its consequences, but traced to its source, because the Grecian wars and transactions, during the space of above two centuries, with the Persian empire, form an important object of attention in the present history.

The revolutions in Upper Asia, till the establishment of the Persian empire.

The first Assyrian monarchy held dominion in Upper Asia, from the northern deserts of Scythia, to the Southern or Indian Ocean. On the west it was separated by the river Malys from the dominions of Lydia. The river Indus formed its eastern boundary.[32] The conquerors of the East have assumed, in all ages, the title of King of Kings; a title expressive of the nature, as well as of the greatness of their power. The various provinces which they conquered, though acknowledging their universal dependence on the Emperor, were yet subject to their particular princes, who, while they paid their appointed tribute during peace, and furnished their contingent of troops in time of war, were permitted, in their ancient territories, to retain their power, and to display the pomp of royalty. This system of government is more favourable to the extension than to the permanence of empire. The different

[31] Strabo, l. xv. p. 729.

[32] I speak according to received accounts; a critical and consistent history of Assyria is attempted in my history of the world, &c. sect. ii.

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members of this unwieldy body were so feebly connected with each other, that to secure their united submission required almost as much genius as to achieve their conquest. When the spirit which animated the immense mass was withdrawn, the different parts fell asunder; revolutions were no less rapid than frequent; and, by one of those events familiar in the history of the East, the warlike sceptre of Ninus and Semiramis was wrested from the effeminate hands of Sardanapalus. In the year seven hundred and forty-six before Christ, the provincial governors of Babylonia and Media, disdaining to receive orders from this enervated shadow of their ancient lords, rejected his contemptible authority, and established two new dynasties, which, having governed Asia for two centuries, were again re-united by the fortunate valour of Cyrus.

Extraction of Cyrus.

This extraordinary man, who raised the Persian glory on the ruins of the Medes and Babylonians, was the son of Cambyses, the tributary prince of Persia: on the mother's side he derived a more honourable descent from Mandana, daughter of Astyages, the supreme lord of Media, and many kingdoms of the East. The powerful monarchy erected by Cyrus was distinguished by the name of his native province, as the preceding empires had been denominated after the provinces of their respective conquerors, although all of them, comprehending the same nations, were bounded by nearly the same limits; Cyrus alone having extended his empire to the Grecian sea.

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Description of Persia.

The territory of Persia, to the name of which we allude, is situate on the southern frontiers of Media, and reaches to the Persian Gulf. The mountainous nature of the country renders it improper for cavalry, but it formerly produced a bold and hardy race of men, who, uncorrupted by the effeminacy of the Asiatic plains, required only the directing genius of a commander to conduct them to war and victory. Such a commander they found in Cyrus, whose mind, bursting through the shackles imposed on virtues and abilities by the manners and climate of the East[33], extended the name and conquests of Persia from the Tigris to the Indus, and from the Caspian Sea to the Ocean; a name which, after the revolution of so many ages and empires, is still retained by that spacious region of the earth.

The early institutions of that country embellished by ancient historians.

As it is natural to account, by extraordinary causes, for extraordinary events, historians have ascribed institutions and customs to the Persians worthy of rendering them the masters of the world. The philosophical Xenophon, embellishing with wonderful art the most admired, and the most admirable, branches of Grecian discipline, has bestowed them with too lavish a generosity on the founders of a nation who became the unrelenting enemies of his country. But, notwithstanding all the refinements of his ingenious and well-cultivated invention, it is not impossible to see through the laboured artifice of the disguise; and as truth only is consistent, we may discern very

[33] See his panegyric in Xenophon's Cyropædia, and in Æschylus's Persis.

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material contradictions in the only remaining accounts of the ancient manners of the Persians.

Their early education consisted, if we may credit both Xenophon and Herodotus, in learning to manage the horse, to shoot with the bow, and to speak truth. Yet it is necessary to observe that the first of those arts, how well soever it might be understood in later times by the Persian nobility, must have been very little known to their ancestors in the time of Cyrus. The craggy mountains which they inhabited were unfavourable to the rearing of horses, and the poverty of their circumstances was ill-adapted to maintain them. While all the other nations of Upper Asia, except some tribes of Scythians, fought on horseback, the Persian armies were composed chiefly of infantry: and when we consider the tremendous energies of the phalanx under Philip and Alexander, and that the Romans under the republic, as well as the northern Barbarians who overran and subdued the countries of the east and west, became masters of the world chiefly through the firm intrepidity of their infantry, there is reason to assign, as the main cause of the Persian conquests, not their acquaintance with horsemanship, but rather their ignorance of that art, which obliged them to employ the determined valour of foot soldiers against the desultory assaults of horsemen. The Persians were commonly armed with swords and lances, instead of bows and darts, the usual weapons of the people of Asia. This distinction was occasioned by their want of cavalry. While their neighbours,

Real causes of the Persian grandeur.

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trusting to the metal and swiftness of their steeds, employed the harmless efforts of distant hostility, the Persians fought hand to hand, each man buckling closely to his foe. If defeated, they had no means of escape; but it was not to be expected that practising such a superior style of war, under the conduct of an accomplished general, they should ever meet with a defeat; and indeed Cyrus always proved victorious over the civilised nations of Asia; nor was the career of his triumph interrupted, till contending against the barbarous Scythians, who joined the Persian arms and discipline to their own resistless fury, he lost at once his army and his life. [34]

The reign of Cyrus. A.C. 559, —529. His first conquests.

But before experiencing this fatal reverse of fortune, he was destined, in the course of thirty years, to act a distinguished part on the theatre of the world, which long retained the marks, and will always preserve the memory, of his reign. Among the first conquests of Cyrus were the territories of Armenia and Chaldea, which had openly revolted against established authority. If we believe Xenophon, Cyrus was sent against those rebellious countries as the lieutenant of his grandfather Astyages, who, from his palace in Ecbatan, diffused his sovereign mandates over many provinces of Upper Asia. The relation of Herodotus makes it probable that Cyrus had before this time assumed the government of Media, over which the cruelty, injustice, and superstí-

[34] In the history of Cyrus, the plain relation of Herodotus is to be preferred to the moral embellishments of Xenophon, except when the accounts of the latter are confirmed by the authority of Scripture.

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tious fears of Astyages, rendered him unworthy to reign, even in the opinion of his most trusty subjects.

Which alarm Crœsus. Olymp. lvi. 4. A.C. 549.

However that may be, (for it affects not the design of the present narrative,) it was natural to expect that the Persian success in Armenia, a province situate so near to the Lydian dominions, should alarm the fears of Crœsus, and determine that prince to resist the encroachments of a power which endangered the permanence of his own. In taking this resolution, which might probably be attended with the most important consequences, he was desirous to learn the will of Heaven concerning the issue of the war. The principal oracles which he consulted were those of Branchis in Ionia, of Hammon in Lybia, and of Delphi in Greece. Among these respected shrines, the oracle of Delphi maintained its ascendant, as the most faithful interpreter of fate. Crœsus was fully persuaded of its veracity; and desirous generously to compensate for the trouble which he had already given, and still meant to give the priests of Apollo, he sacrificed three thousand oxen to the god, and adorned his shrine with dedications, equally valuable for the workmanship and for the materials; precious vessels of silver, ewers of iron beautifully inlaid and enamelled; various ornaments of pure gold, particularly a golden lion, weighing ten talents, and a female figure, three cubits, or near five feet high. In return for these magnificent presents, the oracle, in ambiguous language, flattered Crœsus with the hope of obtaining an easy victory over

Crœsus consults the oracle of Delphi.

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his enemies, and enjoying a long life and a prosperous reign. The god at the same time enjoined him to contract an alliance with the most powerful of the Grecian states.

Enters into an alliance with the Lacedæmonians. Olymp. lviii. 1. A. C. 548.

Elated with these favourable predictions of Apollo, Crœsus prepared to yield a ready obedience to the only condition required on his part, for the accomplishment of his aspiring purpose. Not deeming himself sufficiently acquainted with the affairs of Greece, to know what particular republic was meant by the oracle, he made particular enquiry of those best informed concerning the state of Europe, and discovered, that among all the members of the Grecian confederacy, the Athenians and Lacedæmonians were justly entitled to the pre-eminence. In order to learn which of these communities deserved the epithet of most powerful, it was necessary to send ambassadors into Greece. The Lydians, dispatched with this important commission, soon discovered that the Athenians, after having been recently much harassed by internal dissensions, were actually governed by the tyrant Pisistratus. The Spartans, on the other hand, though anciently the worst regulated of all the Grecian communities, had enjoyed domestic peace, and foreign prosperity, ever since their adoption of the wise institutions of Lycurgus. After that memorable period, they had repeatedly conquered the warlike Argives, triumphed over the hardy Arcadians, and notwithstanding the heroic exploits of Aristomenes, subdued and enslaved their unfortunate rivals of Messené. To the Lydian

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ambassadors, therefore, the Spartan republic appeared to be pointed out by the oracle, as the community whose alliance they were enjoined to solicit. Having repaired accordingly to Sparta, they were introduced not only to the kings and senate, but, as the importance of the negociation required, to the general assembly of the Lacedæmonians, to whom they, in few words, declared the object of their commission: "We are sent, O Lacedæmonians! by Crœsus, King of the Lydians, and of many other nations, who being commanded by the oracle of Apollo to seek the friendship of the most powerful people of Greece, now summons you, who justly merit that epithet, to become his faithful allies, in obedience to the will of the god whose authority you acknowledge." The Lacedæmonians, pleased with the alliance of a warlike king, and still more with the far spread renown of their valour, readily accepted the proposal. To the strict connection of an offensive and defensive league, they joined the more respected ties of sacred hospitality. A few years before this transaction, they had sent to purchase gold at Sardis, for making a statue of Apollo. Crœsus had on that occasion gratuitously supplied their want. Remembering this generosity, they gave the Lydian ambassadors, at their departure, as a present for their master, a vessel of brass, containing three hundred amphoras, (above twelve hogsheads,) and beautifully carved on the outside with various forms of animals.

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Crœsus, having thus happily accomplished the design recommended by the oracle, was eager to set out upon his intended expedition. He had formerly entered into alliance with Amasis King of Egypt, and Labynetus King of Babylon. He had now obtained the friendship of the most warlike nation of Europe. The newly-raised power of Cyrus and the Persians seemed incapable of resisting such a formidable confederacy.

His flattering prospects.

Elated with these flattering ideas of his own invincible greatness, Crœsus waited not to attack the Persian dominions until he had collected the strength of his allies. The sanguine impetuosity of his temper, unexperienced in adversity, unfortunately precipitated him into measures no less ruinous than daring. Supported only by the arms of Lydia, and a numerous band of mercenaries, whom his immense wealth enabled him at any time to call into his service, he marched towards the river Halys, and having crossed, with much difficulty, that deep and broad stream, entered the province of Cappadocia, which formed the western frontier of the Median dominions. That unfortunate country soon experienced all the calamities of invasion. The Pterian plain, the most beautiful and the most fertile district of Cappadocia, was laid waste; the ports of the Euxine, as well as several inland cities, were plundered; and the inoffensive inhabitants were either put to the sword, or dragged into captivity. Encouraged by the unresisting softness of the natives of those parts, Crœsus was eager to push forwards; and if Cyrus did not previ-

He invades the Persian territories. Olymp. lviii. 1. A. C. 548.

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ously meet him in the field, he had determined to proceed in triumph to the mountains of Persia. Against this dangerous resolution he was in vain exhorted by a Lydian named Sandanis, who, when asked his opinion of the war, declared it with that freedom which the princes of the East have in every age permitted, amidst all the pride and caprices of despotic power, to men distinguished by the gifts of nature or education. "You are preparing, O King, to march against a people who lead a laborious and miserable life; whose daily subsistence is often denied them, and is always scanty and precarious; who drink only water, and who are clothed with the skins of wild beasts. What can the Lydians gain by the conquest of Persia; they who enjoy all the advantages of which the Persians are destitute? For my part, I deem it a blessing of the gods, that they have not excited the warlike poverty of these miserable Barbarians to invade and plunder the luxurious wealth of Lydia."[35] The moderation of this advice was rejected by the fatal presumption of Crœsus, who, confounding the dictates of experienced wisdom with the mean suggestions of pusillanimity, dismissed the counsellor with contempt.

Is defeated by Cyrus in Cappadocia.

Meanwhile, the approach of Cyrus, who was not of a temper to permit his dominions to be ravaged with impunity, afforded the Lydian king an opportunity of bringing the war to a more speedy issue than by his intended expedition into Persia. The army of Cyrus gradually augmented

[35] Herodot. l. i. c. 71.

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on his march, the tributary princes cheerfully contributing with their united strength towards the assistance of a master whose valour and generosity they admired, and who now took arms to protect the safety of his subjects, as well as to uphold the grandeur of his throne. Such was the rapidity of his movement, especially after being informed of the destructive ravages of the enemy in Cappadocia, that he arrived from the shores of the Caspian to those of the Euxine Sea, before the army of Crœsus had provided the necessaries for their march. That prince, when apprised of the neighbourhood of the Persians, encamped on the Pterian plain; Cyrus likewise encamped at no great distance; frequent skirmishes happened between the light troops, and at length a general engagement was fought with equal fury and perseverance, and only terminated by the darkness of night. The loss on both sides hindered a renewal of the battle. The numbers, as well as the courage of the Persians, much exceeded the expectation of Crœsus. As they discovered not any intention to harass his retreat, he determined to move back towards Sardis, to spend the winter in the amusements of his palace, and after summoning his numerous allies to his standard, to take the field early in the spring, with such an increase of force as seemed sufficient to overpower the Persians. [86]

The prudent conduct of Cyrus.

But this design was defeated by the careful vigilance of Cyrus. That experienced leader allowed the enemy to retire without molestation;

[86] Herodot. l. i. c. 77.

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carefully informing himself of every step which they took, and of every measure which they seemed determined to pursue. Patiently watching the opportunity of a just revenge, he waited until Crœsus had re-entered his capital, and had disbanded the foreign mercenaries, who composed the most numerous division of his army. It then seemed the proper time for Cyrus to put his Persians in motion; and such was his celerity, that he brought the first news of his own arrival in the plain of Sardis.[37] Crœsus, whose firmness might well have been shaken by the imminence of this unforeseen danger, was not wanting, on the present occasion, to the duties which he owed to his own fame, and the lustre of the Lydian throne. Though his mercenaries were disbanded, his own subjects, who served him from attachment, who had been long accustomed to victory, and who were animated with a high sense of national honour, burned with the desire of enjoying an opportunity to check the daring insolence of the invaders. Crœsus indulged and encouraged this generous ardour. The Lydians, in that age, fought on horseback, armed with long spears; the strength of the Persians consisted in infantry. They were so little accustomed to the use of horses, that camels were almost the only animals which they employed as beasts of burden. This circumstance suggested to a Mede, by name Harpagus, a stratagem, which, being communicated to Cyrus, was immediately adopted with approbation by that

[37] Αυτος αγγελος Κροισῳ εληλυθεε. "He came his own messenger to Crœsus."

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prince.[38] Harpagus, having observed that horses had a strong aversion to the shape and smell of camels, advised the Persian army to be drawn up in the following order. All the camels, which had been employed to carry baggage and provisions, were collected into one body, arranged in a long line fronting the Lydian cavalry: the foot soldiers of the Persians were posted immediately behind the line, and placed at a due distance: the Median horse (for a few squadrons of these followed the standard of Cyrus) formed the rear of the army. As the troops on both sides approached to join battle, the Lydian cavalry, terrified at the unusual appearance of the camels, mounted with men in arms, were thrown into disorder, and turning their heads, endeavoured to escape from the field. Crœsus, who perceived the confusion, was ready to despair of his fortune; but the Lydians, abandoning their horses, prepared with uncommon bravery to attack the enemy on foot. Their courage deserved a better fate; but unaccustomed as they were to this mode of fighting, they were received and repelled by the experienced valour of the Persian infantry, and obliged to take refuge within the fortified strength of Sardis, where they imagined themselves secure. The walls of that city bid defiance to the rude art of attack, as then practised by the most warlike nations. If the Persian army should invest it, the Lydians were provided with magazines containing provi-

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Defeats Crœsus in the plain of Sardis.

Crœsus shuts himself up in that city, and craves assistance from his Spartan allies.

[38] Herodot. l. i. c. lxxx.

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sions for several years; and there was reason to expect, that in a few months, and even weeks, they would receive such assistance from Egypt, Babylonia, and Greece, (to which countries they had already sent ambassadors,) as would oblige the Persians to raise the siege. [39]

State of Sparta at that time.

The Lydian ministers dispatched into Greece met with great sympathy from the Spartans. That people were particularly observant of the faith of treaties; and while they punished their enemies with unexampled severity, they behaved with generous compassion towards those whom they had once accepted for allies. The benevolent principles of their nature were actually warmed and elevated by the triumph of a successful expedition against the most formidable of their domestic foes. They had maintained a long and bloody war with the Argives, for the small, but valuable district of Thyrea, lying on the frontiers of the rival states. The Spartans at length obtained possession of it; but the Argives advanced with an army more powerful than any that they had ever led into the field, in order to make good their ancient pretensions. The wars of the Greeks were not merely undertaken from the dictates of interest and ambition, but considered as trials of skill, and contests of honour. When a conference, therefore, was proposed, we know not by which of the parties, it was agreed, in order to prevent a greater effusion of blood, that three hundred combatants on

[39] Herodot. l. i. c. lxxx.

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the Spartan, and an equal number on the Argive side, should determine, by the success of their arms, the disputed title to Thyrea, as well as the warlike pre-eminence of their respective republics. Three hundred champions being selected for this purpose from either army, it seemed necessary that the remainder of both nations should retire; for the Argive and Spartan citizens, who felt with a republican sensibility for the interest of their communities, could not have remained tame spectators of the battle. The combatants fought with an obstinate valour, of which there are few examples in history. Each soldier behaved as if the success of the day had been committed to his single spear; and each was eager to sacrifice his own life to the preservation of his country's fame. These generous sentiments were fully proved by the issue of the battle. At the approach of night only three combatants survived, two Argives, and the Spartan Othryades. The Argives, either through neglect or pity, spared the life of their single opponent, and returned home with the melancholy tidings of their bloody victory. Othryades still kept the field, collecting the spoil, and carrying into his own camp the arms of the enemy, which he erected into the usual trophy of military success. Next day the two armies, consisting of a great proportion of the citizens capable of bearing arms, arrived at the scene of action. The surprise of the Argives is not to be expressed, when they beheld the appearance of the field. Notwithstanding the Spartan trophy, they still insisted,

Their victories over the Argives.

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that as *two* of their champions, and only *one* of the enemy's, had survived, they were justly entitled to the glory of the day; but, seemingly with more reason, the Spartans maintained that this honour belonged to Othryades. From verbal altercation, carried on with that warmth which the importance of the dispute naturally inspired, they made an easy transition to acts of violence.[40] The conflict was long, fierce, and bloody; but the superior discipline of Sparta finally prevailed. The Argives lamented their defeat, as the greatest calamity that had ever befallen them. The inward feelings of their hearts were expressed by external demonstrations of sorrow. Like most of the Grecian nations, they had hitherto adorned their long hair, to increase the gracefulness of manly beauty, and to render their appearance more terrible to their enemies. But in remembrance of this disaster, they shaved their heads[41], deprived the Argive women of their golden ornaments, and bound themselves by a dreadful imprecation that neither should resume their wonted finery, until they had re-

[40] Herodot. l. i. c. lxxxii.

[41] At funerals, the Greeks cut off their hair, to be consumed in the funeral pile with the bodies of their friends. Thus, at the interment of Patroclus, Achilles

Ἴτας απαρευθε πυρης ξανθην απεκειρατο χαιτην
Την ρα Σπερχειῳ ποταμῳ τρεφε τηλεθοωσαν.

In the Orestes of Euripides, Helen is blamed for sparing her locks, and cutting off only the ends. "She is," says Electra, "ἡ ταλαινα γυνη, the same coquette as ever." Lysias, speaking of a great national calamity, says metaphorically, "It becomes Greece to shave her head." Lysias, Orat. Funeb. The Argives, as a community, realised the metaphor.

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covered possession of Thyrea. The Spartans, on the other hand, celebrated their victory with the liveliest expressions of national triumph. Othryades alone partook not the general joy. Ashamed of returning to Sparta a solitary monument of three hundred brave men, he, with a generous despair, sacrificed his own life to the manes of his warlike companions. Such were the circumstances of the Lacedæmonian republic, when the ambassadors of Crœsus came to demand their assistance. The prosperity of their own situation naturally heightened, by contrast, the melancholy condition of their unfortunate ally, besieged, as they learned, in his capital, by a victorious army. They immediately resolved to send him a speedy and effectual relief; and for this purpose assembled their troops, made ready their vessels, and prepared every thing necessary for the expedition.

They determine to assist Crœsus.

The valour of the Spartans might perhaps have upheld the sinking empire of Lydia, but before their armament could set sail, Crœsus was no longer a sovereign. Notwithstanding the strength of Sardis, that city had been taken by storm, on the twentieth day of the siege; the walls having been scaled in a quarter, which, appearing altogether inaccessible, was too carelessly guarded. This was effected by the enterprise of Hyreades, a Mede, who accidentally observed a centinel descend part of the rock in order to recover his helmet. Hyreades was a native of the mountainous province of Mardia, and being accustomed to clamber over the dangerous precipices

Sardis taken by the Persians. Olymp. lviii. A. C. 548.

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of his native country, resolved to try his activity in passing the rock upon which he had discovered the Lydian. The design was more easily accomplished than he had reason to expect; emulation and success encouraged the bravest of the Persians to follow his example; these were supported by greater numbers of their countrymen; the garrison of Sardis was surprised; the citadel stormed; and the rich capital of Lower Asia subjected to the vengeful rapacity of an indignant victor. [42]

The Persians were accustomed, like other nations of the ancient world, to exercise the rights of conquest without respecting the laws of humanity. Though they fought, and conquered, and plundered, only for the benefit of their prince, whose slaves and property they themselves were, yet in the first emotions of military success they discovered all the eagerness of avarice, and all the fury of resentment; acting as if they had been called to punish, not the enemies of their king, but their own personal foes; and as if each man had been entitled to reap the full fruits of his rapacious cruelty.

Ungenerous treatment of Crœsus.

The Lydian prince, delivered, as we are told, by an extraordinary accident from the blind rage of the soldiery [43], seemed to be reserved for a

[42] Herodot. l. i. c. lxxxiv.

[43] Herodot. p. 36. Crœsus had a dumb son, who seeing a Persian rush against his father, whose misfortunes had rendered him careless of life, first spoke on this occasion: Ανθρωπε μη κτεινε Κροισον. The learned in physiology will decide, whether certain impediments of speech may sometimes be conquered by the impetuous violence of a bursting passion.

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harder fate. Dragged into the presence of his conqueror, he was loaded with irons: and the stern, unrelenting Cyrus, of whose humane temper of mind, we have so beautiful, but so flattering a picture in the philosophical romance of Xenophon, ordered him with the melancholy train of his Lydian attendants to be committed to the flames. An immense pile of wood and other combustibles were erected in the most spacious part of the city. The miserable victims, bound hand and foot, were placed on the top of the pyre. Cyrus, surrounded by his generals, witnessed the dreadful spectacle, either from an abominable principle of superstition, if he had bound himself by a vow to sacrifice Crœsus as the first fruits of his Lydian victory, or from a motive of curiosity, equally cruel and impious, to try whether Crœsus, who had so magnificently adorned the temples, and enriched the ministers of the gods, would be helped in time of need by the miraculous interposition of his much honoured protectors. [44]

Meanwhile the unfortunate Lydian, oppressed and confounded by the intolerable weight of his present calamity, compared with the security and splendour of his former state, recollected his memorable conversation with the Athenian sage, and uttered, with a deep groan, the name of Solon. Cyrus asked by an interpreter, "Whose name he invoked?" "*His*," replied Crœsus, emboldened by the prospect of certain death,

[44] Herodot. l. i. c. lxxxvi.

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"whose words ought ever to speak to the heart of kings." This reply not being satisfactory, he was commanded to explain, at full length, the subject of his thoughts. Accordingly he related the important discourse which had passed between himself and the Athenian, of which it was the great moral that no man could be called happy till his death.[45]

Cyrus receives him into favour.

The words of a dying man are fitted to make a strong impression on the heart. Those of Crœsus deeply affected the mind of Cyrus. The Persian considered the speech of Solon, as addressed to himself. He repented of his intended cruelty towards a fallen prince, who had formerly enjoyed all the pomp of prosperity: and dreading the concealed vengeance that might lurk in the bosom of Fate, gave orders that the pyre should be extinguished. But the workmen who had been employed to prepare it, had performed their task with so much care, that the order could not speedily be obeyed. At that moment, Crœsus calling on Apollo, whose favourite shrine of Delphi had experienced his generous munificence, and whose perfidious oracle had made him so ungrateful a return, the god, it is said, sent a plentiful shower to extinguish the pyre. This event, which saved the life, and which sufficiently attested the piety of Crœsus, strongly recommended him to the credulity of his conqueror. It seemed impossible to pay too much respect to a man who was evidently the

[45] See above, p. 505.

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favourite of heaven. Cyrus gave orders that he should be seated by his side, and thenceforth treated as a king; a revolution of fortune equally sudden and unexpected. But the mind of Crœsus had undergone a still more important revolution; for, tutored in the useful school of adversity, he learned to think with patience, and to act with prudence; to govern his own passions by the dictates of reason, and to repay by wholesome advice the generous behaviour of his Persian master.[46]

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Crœsus reproaches the oracle of Delphi:

The first advantage which he derived from the change in Cyrus's disposition towards him, was the permission of sending his fetters to the temple of Delphian Apollo, whose flattering oracles had encouraged him to wage war with the Persians. "Behold," were his messengers instructed to say, "the trophies of our promised success! behold the monuments of the unerring veracity of the god!" The Pythia heard their reproach with a smile of contemptuous indignation, and answered it with that solemn gravity which she was so carefully taught to assume: "The gods themselves cannot avoid their *own* destiny, much less avert, however they may retard, the determined fates of men. Crœsus had suffered, and justly suffered, for the crime of his ancestor Gyges, who entrusted, as chief of the guards, with the person of Candaules, the last king of the race of Hercules, was seduced by an impious woman to murder his master, to defile his bed,

[46] Herodot. l. i. c. lxxxix.

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and to usurp his royal dignity. For this complicated guilt of Gyges the misfortunes of Crœsus have atoned; but know, that, through the favour of Apollo, these misfortunes have happened three years later than the fates ordained."[47] The Pythia then proceeded to explain her answers concerning the event of the war against Cyrus, and proved, to the conviction of the Lydians, that her words, if properly understood, portended the destruction, not of the Persian, but of the Lydian empire. Crœsus heard with resignation the report of his messengers, and acknowledged the justice of the Delphian oracle, which maintained and increased the lustre of its ancient fame.

whose predictions are explained to his satisfaction.

[47] Herodot. l. i. c. xci. et seq.

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CHAP. VIII.

Cyrus threatens the Asiatic Colonies. — Their Measures. — The Spartans remonstrate against his Design. — Conquests of Harpagus. — Migrations of the vanquished Greeks. — Cyrus takes Babylon. — Cambyses subdues Egypt. — Receives Tribute from the African Greeks. — Reign of Darius. — Final Settlement of the Persian Empire. — Degeneracy of Manners. — Revolt of Ionia. — State of Greece. — The Ionian Revolt abetted by the Athenians and Eretrians — who burn Sardis. — The Asiatic Greeks defeated by Sea and Land. — Their Condition under the Persian Government.

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Cyrus threatens the Ioninns. Olymp. lviii. 2. A. C. 547.

During the reign of Crœsus, and his four warlike predecessors, the Asiatic Greeks sometimes enjoyed their favourite form of republican government, sometimes submitted to domestic tyrants, alternately recovered and lost their national independence. The success of the ambitious Cyrus was not likely to improve the condition of the Ionians, who, during the dependence of his fortune, had repeatedly neglected opportunities to deserve his gratitude. Before invading Lower Asia, he earnestly entreated them to share the glory of his arms; but they preferred their allegiance to Crœsus, before the friendship of a less known, and perhaps severer, tyrant. When the fortune of war, or rather the superiority

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of his own genius, had given Cyrus possession of all the neighbouring provinces, the Ionians were forward to declare, by embassy, their acceptance of his proffered alliance; or, if that should now be refused, to request his protection on the same terms granted by his Lydian predecessor. This submissive proposal only inflamed the ambition of the Persian; and his celebrated answer[1], on this occasion, clearly announced to the Greeks, that if they would escape the rigour of servitude, they must owe their safety to the strenuous exertions of a brave defence, not to the clemency of Cyrus.

Measures of the Asiatic colonies.

When his hostile intentions were made known in Ionia, the inhabitants of that delightful country assembled in the Panionian grove, their ordinary rendezvous in general and important deliberations. This place, which, together with the adjoining promontory of Mycalé, was solemnly consecrated to Neptune, formed the centre of the Ionic coast. Towards the north extended the spacious bay of Ephesus, beyond which the beautiful peninsula of Clazomené stretched an hundred miles into the Ægean. On the south, the territory of Miletus occupied sixty-two miles of the winding shore. But the Milesians sent not their deputies to the present convention; for having been the con-

[1] After the Oriental fashion, he answered them by an apologue. A piper seeing a great swarm of fishes in the sea, began to play, in order to allure them to land. But as they disregarded his music, he employed a net with better success. When caught, the fishes jumped about in the net; but he told them, "It is unnecessary now to dance, since I have ceased to play." Herodot. l. i. c. cxli.

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federates, not the subjects of Crœsus, they were admitted into the Persian alliance on terms of equality and independence. The Grecian interest in Asia, thus ungenerously abandoned by the principal member of the confederacy, was supported with unusual spirit and unanimity by all the inferior communities. Representatives immediately appeared from Myus and Priené, which were situate, like Miletus, on the coast of Caria; from Ephesus, Colophon, Lebedus, Tros, Clazomené, Erythræ, Phocæa, and Smyrna, which formed the maritime part of Lydia; and from the isles of Chios and Samos, which completed the whole number of the Ionic settlements.

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The Ionian confederacy.

Meanwhile the Eolians, alarmed by the same danger, convened in their ancient capital of Cymé. Their inferior towns were Larissa, Neontichus, Tenus, Cilla, Notion, Æginoæssa, Pitané, Ægæa, Myrina, and Greneia. Their territory was more extensive and more fertile than that of their Ionian rivals, but their climate less temperate[2], their harbours less commodious, and their cities far less considerable in power and fame.

That of the Eolians

It may seem extraordinary that the Dorians, especially those inhabiting the peninsula of

Of the Dorians.

[2] Herodotus's encomium on the climate of Ionia is remarkable: Οι δε Ιωνες ουτοι, των και το Πανιωνιον εστι, τα μεν ορεινα και των ορεων εν τω καλλιστῳ ευτυγχανον ιδρυσαμενοι πολεας, ουτιν ανθρωπων των ἡμεις ἱδμεν: "These Ionians, to whom Panionium belongs, have built cities in the finest climate, and in the most beautiful situations, of all men whom we know." He then proceeds to observe, that the countries on all sides of Ionia were oppressed by cold and humidity on the one hand, or heat and drought on the other. Herodot. l. i. c. cxii.

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Caria, who were likewise destined to feel the Persian power, should not have joined in measures necessary for the common defence. But this circumstance it is still possible to explain. Of the six Doric republics, who annually assembled at Triopium to celebrate the festival of Apollo, four[3] were encouraged, by their insular situation, to contemn the threats of Cyrus. Cnidus, as will appear hereafter, hoped to derive from art the same advantages which its confederates, Cos, Lindus, Jalissus, and Camirus, enjoyed by nature. And Halicarnassus, the sixth Dorian state, as we are informed with a laudable impartiality by a native of that city, had been recently excluded from the Triopian festival. This disgrace was occasioned by the sordid avarice of Agasicles, the Halicarnassian, who having conquered in the Triopian games, carried away the tripod, which was the prize of his victory; whereas, according to an established rule, he ought to have consecrated it in the temple of Apollo. His sacrilege deprived his country of the common benefits of the Dorian name.[4]

Contrast between the ancient and modern state of Lower Asia.

To enliven the dryness of geographical description, essential, however, to the perspicuity of the present narrative, we should in vain turn our thoughts to the actual condition of the Asiatic shore. Few vestiges remain of the Doric and Eolic cities; and even the Ionic, which far surpassed them in magnificence and splendor, can

[3] Three in the isle of Rhodes, one in Cos.
[4] Herodot. l. i. c. cxliv.

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scarcely be recognized by the learned and curious traveller. Nothing now remains but the indelible impressions of nature; the works of men have perished with themselves. The physical advantages of Lower Asia continue nearly [5] the same now as two thousand years ago; but the moral condition of that country, compared to what it once was, is the silent obscurity of the grave, contrasted with the vivid lustre of active life. CHAP. VIII.

The Asiatic Greeks having examined the state of their affairs, felt their own weakness, compared with the strength of the enemy. In forming their establishments in Asia, they had confined themselves to a long and narrow line on the coast, looking with a wishful eye towards the mother-country, from which, in every calamity, they expected assistance and protection. The result, therefore, of the present deliberation was to send an embassy into Greece, in order to explain the danger to which they were exposed, and to shew the necessity of powerful and timely aid. It might have been expected that Attica, the native country of the Ionians, should have received the first visit of the ambassadors; but Athens was then governed by the tyrant Pisistratus, who, it was supposed, would be averse to take arms against a tyrant like himself. Sparta, though a republic of greater power and renown, was little connected, either by commerce or affinity, with the Greeks of Asia. The propo- The Asiatic Greeks send an embassy, craving aid, to the mother-country. Olymp. lviii. A.C. 540.

[5] The changes in the face of the country, produced chiefly by the receding of the sea, may be seen in the splendid work of Mons. Choiseuil Gouffier, Le Voyage Pitorresque de la Grêce, &c.

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sals of the Asiatic ambassadors, therefore, were very coolly received by the Spartan senate. On such occasions, however, it was customary to take the opinions also of the people. In the assembly convened for this purpose, Pythermus, a Phocæan, clothed with purple, as a mark of his consideration in his native country, spoke for himself and his colleagues. But the beauties of his Ionic dialect were unable to move the resolution of the Lacedæmonians, who, mindful of the ancient enmity between the Ionic and the Doric race, declined sending any forces into Asia, to resist the arms of Cyrus. Though their generosity furnished no public assistance, their caution privately dispatched several Spartan citizens to observe the operations of the war. When these men arrived in Ionia, they were easily persuaded to exceed the bounds of their commission. They appointed Lacrines, the most considerable of their number, to travel to the Lydian capital, in order to acquaint Cyrus, that if he committed hostilities against any of the Grecian cities, the Lacedæmonian republic would know how to punish his injustice. Cyrus, astonished at such an insolent message from a people altogether unknown to him, asked the Greeks present, (for there was always a great number of Grecian fugitives in the armies of their neighbours,) who the Lacedæmonians [6] were? and what number of men they could bring into the field? When informed of these particulars,

The Spartans remonstrate with Cyrus against his design of subduing the Asiatic Greeks.

[6] Herodotus leaves it uncertain whether this ignorance was not affected, the better to mark his contempt.

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he replied to the Spartan ambassador, "That he never should fear men who had a square in the midst of their city, in which they met together to practise mutual falsehood and deception[7]; and that if he continued to enjoy the blessings of health, he hoped to afford the Spartans more domestic reasons of complaint than his military preparations against the Greeks of Asia."

His answer to them.

The interview with Lacrines happened among the last public transactions during Cyrus's residence at Sardis. Having reduced Crœsus into captivity, the only enemy in those parts who seemed worthy of his arms, he was eager to return towards the East, in order to complete his conquests in Upper Asia. The Grecians he knew to be a warlike people; but as their numbers were inconsiderable, their cities small and ill fortified, he thought proper to attempt in person enterprises of greater renown, and to commit the Grecian war to the skill of his lieutenant, Harpagus.[8]

His lieutenant Harpagus reduces all the countries of Lower Asia. Olymp. lx. 2. A. C. 539.

In the course of a few months, this general made himself master of all the countries of Lower Asia, possessed by either Greeks or Barbarians. Having the command of men and labour, he caused mounds of earth to be thrown up adjacent to the Grecian walls. In this service, immense

[7] Cyrus alludes to the market-places, or public squares, common in all Grecian cities, with the use of which the Persians were totally unacquainted, "being destitute," as Herodotus says, "of all places of public resort."

[8] His predecessor, Mazares, died almost immediately after he had taken Priené and Magnesia, and sold the inhabitants for slaves. Herodot. l. i. c. lxi.

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numbers must have perished by the darts of the enemy; but the work was no sooner completed, than the Persians, running up to the mounds, got possession of the walls, drove the Greeks from their battlements, overpowered them from their own fortifications, entered and sacked their towns.[9]

The Phocæans leave their country. Olymp. lx. 2. A. C. 559.

When we consider the fury with which the wars of the ancients were carried on, and reflect that the immediate consequences of a defeat were servitude or death, we have reason to believe that the Greeks would make a resolute and bloody defence. This indeed sufficiently appears by the evidence of a few scattered facts preserved in history. The first place which Harpagus attacked was the celebrated capital of the Phocæans, the most northern city of Ionia. The inhabitants, as already mentioned, were famous for their long and successful navigations, in the course of which they had often visited the coasts of Spain, the Mexico and Peru of the ancient world. The money derived from that country had enabled them to build the best fortification that was to be seen in all those parts; yet they entertained not any hopes of resisting the Persian invaders. Such, however, was their love of liberty, and their dread of seeing in their streets the army of a conqueror, that they resolved on a measure which has been often proposed, but seldom executed. When Harpagus sent them his commands, they begged the favour of a day's pause for deliberation. In all

[9] Herodot. lib. i. cap. clxii. clxiii. et seq.

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probability they had already embraced many necessary measures for effecting their escape; for, during that short interval, their ships were prepared, their money and goods put on board, their wives and families embarked, and the whole community was floating on the waves, when the Persians arrived to take possession of desolated dwellings and empty walls. The advantageous situation of Phocæa, and the pains which had been employed to improve and to embellish it, make this resolution appear the more extraordinary; if any thing at least can add to the wonder, that a whole people should unanimously abandon their temples, their altars, and what in ancient times seemed not less sacred, the tombs of their ancestors; should totally divest themselves of every right to a country which they had been accustomed to call their own; and set sail with their wives and children, ignorant whither to direct their course, or in what friendly port they might expect protection or repose. [10]

Their adventures.

The Phocæan fleet, consisting of more than two hundred sail, made for the isle of Chios, which, of all the Ionic settlements, seemed most secure against the Persian arms. Having arrived there, they endeavoured to purchase from the Chians the small Oenussian islands: but the Chians, jealous of their commerce, and knowing the adventurous spirit of the fugitives, denied their request. The Phocæans, thus cruelly rejected by men of the same race and language

[10] Herodot. l. i. c. clxiv.

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with themselves, set sail, on a much longer voyage, for the isle of Cyrnus, or Corsica, where, about twenty years before, they had formed a small establishment. As they coasted in the night along the solitary shore of their ancient city, a few ships manned with enterprising crews landed in the harbour, surprised the Persian garrison, and put every man to the sword. After applauding this memorable act of revenge, the whole fleet, transported with rage against the Persians, bound themselves by mutual oaths never to return to Phocæa, until a burning ball of iron which they threw into the sea should again emerge unextinguished. [11] Yet such is the powerful attachment of men to their ancient habitations, that in a few hours more than one half the fleet, unable to resist the alluring prospect of their native shore, disregarded their oaths, and sailed for the well-known harbour. The destruction of the Persian garrison removed the only obstacle in the way of immediate possession; and the blame of this massacre might be thrown on their countrymen who fled, while those who returned to Phocæa might prove their innocence by speedily submitting to every burden imposed on them. Meanwhile, the best and bravest portion of the Phocæan republic arrived with safety at the island of Corsica; where their subsequent adventures, not being immediately connected with our present subject, will merit attention in another part of this history. [12]

Part of them return.

The Teians settle in Abdera.

The Phocæans were not the only people of Asiatic Greece who deserted their country rather

[11] Herodot. l. i. c. clxv.

[12] Idem, ibid.

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than surrender their liberty. The Teians, who inhabited the southern shore of the Ionic peninsula, had not yet been softened into cowardice by the effeminate muse of Anacreon. They followed the generous example which the inhabitants of Phocæa had set; forsook a city in which they could no longer remain free, and sought refuge in Abdera, an ancient colony of Clazomenè, on the coast of Thrace, and near the mouth of the river Nessus.[13] The city of Clazomenè, now mentioned, was built on the continent; but on the present occasion the inhabitants, to avoid slavery, settled in eight small islands at a little distance from the shore, on which they founded a new city, the model of that of Venice. The advantage which the Clazomenians enjoyed by nature, the Cnidians endeavoured to procure by art. They dwelt at the extremity of the Carian peninsula; and their city being joined to the continent by an isthmus of only half a mile broad, they attempted by means of a ditch to detach themselves entirely from the main land. If this could be effected, they might despise the power of their enemies, who not having as yet subdued the Phœnicians, possessed not any naval force sufficient to conquer the Grecian isles. But the approach of the Persians, and still more their own superstitious fears, interrupted this useful undertaking; and the city of Cnidus, as well as all others on the Asiatic coast, Miletus alone excepted, were reduced to unconditional submission under the Perisan yoke.

Olymp. lx. 2. A. C. 539.

Measures of the Clazomenians.

Of the Cnidians.

[13] Herodot. l. i. c. lxviii. & c. clxviii.

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Cyrus besieges Babylon. Olymp. lx. 2. A. C. 539.

While the arms of Harpagus were thus successful on the western shore, those of Cyrus acquired still greater glory in the central parts of Asia.[14] With amazing rapidity his victorious troops over-ran the rich countries between the Mediterranean and the Tigris. Every thing gave way before their valour and their fortune. The city of Babylon alone, the ancient and proud capital of the Assyrian empire, opposed its lofty and impenetrable walls to the ambition of the conqueror. When all the countries round were reduced into obedience, it might seem absurd in the inhabitants of one place to think of resisting the Persian arms. But when we consider the singular resources of this place, we shall perceive that a design which would have been obstinate folly in any other citizens, was no more than proper firmness in the Babylonians. Their capital[15], which was celebrated for its magnificence, wealth, and magnitude, when nothing deserving the name of capital existed elsewhere in the world, was situate in a spacious plain, surrounded on all sides by broad and rapid rivers. The outward wall was of a firm quadrangular form, seventy-five feet high, extending forty-eight miles in circumference, and surrounded by a deep ditch, continually supplied

[14] Xenophon's Cyropædia, and Herodotus, contain the materials for the reign of Cyrus, as far as it is connected with the history of Greece. It is foreign to the subject of the present work, to examine the differences between these authors.

[15] For the successive capitals of Assyria, see my History of the World, sect. ii.; and for a particular account of Babylon, see sect. iii.

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with water. Behind this extraordinary bulwark, of whose existence the wall of China and the pyramids of Egypt can alone serve to convince modern incredulity, was another of almost equal dimensions; and besides both these general fortifications, each division of the city had its appropriate mounds and defences. It is unnecessary to describe the parks or paradises, the towers, and temples, which, by their singular greatness, evidently announced the seat of a mighty empire. These magnificent monuments tended, indeed, to adorn, but others less splendid, served to defend Babylon.[16] There were magazines of corn and provisions, sufficient for maintaining the inhabitants during twenty years; and arsenals, which supplied with arms such a number of fighting men as seemed equal to the conquest or defence of a powerful monarchy. It was to be expected that Babylon would exert its utmost strength, being then governed by Labynetus, or Belthazar, whose despotism, injustice, and impiety, exceeded even the crimes of his father Nebuchadnezzar, and left him no room to expect forgiveness from the clemency of Cyrus.

Takes the city by stratagem. Olymp. lx. 3. A. C. 538.

During two years Cyrus blocked up the city, without attaining any nearer prospect of success than when he first approached its walls. The events of this memorable siege are not related by ancient writers. We only know, that the efforts of the Persians proved fruitless, until strength was directed by stratagem. The river Euphrates

[16] Herodot. l. i. c. clxxix. et seq.

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entered, by a deep channel, the northern walls of Babylon, and issuing forth from the opposite side, almost equally bisected the city. Of this circumstance Cyrus availed himself to become master of the place. He employed his numerous army in digging a profound cavern adjacent to the lofty mound which confined the course of the river. This work being completed, he patiently waited an opportunity for cutting the mound, and thus turning the waters of the Euphrates into the prepared cavern; since if this could be done without being perceived by the enemy, his troops, stationed at the two passages of the Euphrates, in and out of the city, might enter Babylon by the channel which the river had abandoned. This design was happily executed, when the Babylonians, who had long despised the impotent efforts of the besiegers, were employed in celebrating a festival, with every circumstance of the most licentious security. The mound of the Euphrates being divided, the highest waters deserted their channel, the river became fordable, and the troops of Cyrus, who, had not the Babylonians been sunk in riot and debauchery, might have been confined between the walls, and overwhelmed by darts from the battlements, made their entrance unperceived into the place, cut to pieces the unarmed inhabitants; and having punished an impious king and his voluptuous courtiers, took possession of the greatest and richest city of the ancient world.[16]

[16] Herodot. l. i. c. clxxvii.—c. cxcii. Confer. Aristot. Politic. l. iii. c. 2.

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This memorable event rendered Cyrus sole master of those valuable countries around the Tigris and Euphrates, which, from time immemorial, had been the seat of despotism and luxury, wealth and wickedness. The active ambition of this great prince was adopted by the emulation of his immediate successors. His son Cambyses received the submission of Tyre and Cyprus, and effected the important conquest of Egypt, in the consequences of which the Greek colonies in that country, and on the adjoining coast of Africa, were involved.

Conquests of his successor, Cambyses. Olymp. lxii. 4. A. C. 529.

Olymp. lxiv. 3. A. C. 524.

In the eighth century before the Christian æra, the adventurous colonies in Ionia and Caria had, amidst other commercial or rather piratical expeditions, undertaken a voyage to Egypt. Their brazen armour[17], their courage, and their activity, were beheld with amazement and terror by the Egyptians, often divided by faction, and then torn by sedition. Psammetichus, one of the many pretenders to the throne, engaged the Greeks in his service. Through their valour and discipline, he made himself master of Egypt. His rewards and promises prevailed on them to settle in that country. They upheld the throne of his successors, until Apries, the fourth in descent from Psammetichus, having undertaken an unfortunate expedition against the Greek colony of Cyrenè, was dethroned by Amasis, the contemporary and ally of Crœsus.[18]

Psammetichus raised to the throne of Egypt by Greek pirates,

who settle in that country:

[17] Herodot. l. ii. c. clii. et seq.

[18] Herodot. ibid. & Diodor. Sicul. l. i. c. xlvi.

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Amasis rivalled the Lydian prince in his partiality for the language and manners of the Greeks. He raised a Cyrenean woman to the honours of his bed. The Greeks who had served his predecessors, and who, in consequence of the Egyptian law, obliging the son to follow the profession of his father, now amounted to near thirty thousand, he removed to Memphis, his capital, and employed them as his body guard. He encouraged the correspondence of this colony with the mother country; invited new inhabitants from Greece into Egypt; promoted the commercial intercourse between the two nations; and assigned to the Greek merchants for their residence the town and district of Naucratis, on the Nile, where they enjoyed the free exercise of their religious processions and solemnities, and where the industry of the little island of Ægina in Europe, and the opulence of several Greek cities in Asia, erected temples after the fashion of their respective countries. [19]

Are employed as the body guard of his successor Amasis.

This able prince was succeeded by his son Psammenitus, soon after Cambyses mounted the throne of Persia. While Cambyses made preparations for invading Egypt, Psammenitus imprudently excited the resentment of Phanes [20], a Halicarnassean by birth, and an officer of much authority in the Grecian guards. Phanes having dexterously effected his escape from Egypt, offered his services to Cambyses, who by this time had collected the Grecian and Phœnician fleets. This armament, however, seemed unequal to the

Cambyses conquers Egypt. Olymp. lxiii. 4. A. C. 525.

[19] Herodot. l. ii. c. clii. et seq. [20] Herodot. l. iii. c. iv. &c.

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conquest of Egypt; and to conduct an army thither by land was an undertaking of extreme difficulty. The main obstacle was overcome by the experience of Phanes. He advised Cambyses to purchase the friendship of an Arabian chief, who agreed to transport on camels a sufficient quantity of water for the use of the Persians in their passage through the desert. With the punctuality peculiar[21] to his nation, the Arabian fulfilled his engagement. The Persian army joined the fleet before Pelusium; that place, regarded as the key of Egypt, surrendered after a short siege; Psammenitus was defeated in a great battle; and the whole kingdom submitted to a haughty conqueror[22], whom prosperity rendered incapable of pity or remorse.

The African Greeks pay tribute to Cambyses.

His cruel, outrageous, or rather frantic behaviour in Egypt, alarmed the neighbouring Africans, who sought to avert the tempest from themselves by speedy offers of submission and tribute. This prudent measure was adopted even by the Greek inhabitants of Cyrenaica, who had braved the united power of Egypt and Lybia. The African Greeks were a colony of Thera, the most southern island of the Ægean, and itself a colony of the Lacedæmonians.[23] During the heroic ages, but it is uncertain at what precise æra, the adventurous islanders settled in that part of the Sinus Syrticus, which derived its name from the principal city, Cyrenè, and which is now lost in the desert of Barca. Descended from Lace-

Their History.

[21] Herodot. ibid.
[22] Idem, ibid.
[23] Herodot. l. iv. c. clix. et seq.

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dæmon, the Cyreneans naturally preserved the regal form of government. Under Battus, the third prince of that name, their territory was well cultivated, and their cities populous and flourishing. Six centuries before the Christian æra, they received a considerable accession of inhabitants from the mother country. Emboldened by this reinforcement, they attacked the neighbouring Lybians[24], and seized on their possessions. The injured craved assistance from Apries king of Egypt.[25] A confederacy was thus formed in order to repress the incursions, and to chastise the audacity of the European invaders. But the valour and discipline of Greece, though they yet feared to encounter the power of Cambyses and the renown of Persia, always triumphed over the numbers and the ferocity of Africa[26]: nor did Cyrenè become tributary to Egypt, till Egypt itself had been subdued by a Grecian king, and the sceptre of the Pharaohs and of Sesostris had passed into the hands of the Ptolemies.[27]

Darius Hystaspis mounts the throne of Persia. Olymp. lxiv. 4. A. C. 521.

Cambyses is said to have died by an accidental wound from his own sword. Darius Hystaspis, the third in succession to the empire, (for the short reign of the priest Smerdis deserves only to be mentioned in the history of the palace,) possessed the political abilities, but reached not the

[24] Herodot. l. iv. c. clix.

[25] Herodot. ibid. Diodor. Sicul. l. i. c. xlvi.

[26] Herodot. ibid. & l. iii. c. clxi.

[27] Strabo, l. ii. & l. xvii. p. 836. Pausan. l. i. for the history of Cyrenè, political and commercial, see my History of the World, chap. 3.

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magnanimity, of Cyrus. His ambition was unbounded, and his avarice still greater than his ambition. To discriminate the characters of the three first and most illustrious of their monarchs, the Persians, in the expressive language of the East, styled Cyrus the father, Cambyses the master or tyrant, and Darius the broker, of the empire. The last-mentioned prince added the wealthy but unwarlike nations of India to his dominions. This important acquisition, which closed the long series of Persian conquests in Asia, was formed into the twentieth satrapy, or great division of the empire. The other military enterprises of this prince (as we shall soon have occasion to relate) were less successful. But his reign is chiefly remarkable as the supposed æra at which the religious and civil polity of the Persians received that form which they afterwards invariably retained.

The supposed age of Zoroaster.

Yet it must be acknowledged, that the greatest learning and ingenuity have failed in the arduous task of ascertaining the age, and still more of explaining the doctrine, of Zoroaster. At whatever period he lived, he certainly did for the Persians what Homer and Hesiod are said to have done for the Greeks.[28] His theogony[29], as the Greeks would have called it, consisted in the extravagant doctrine of the two principles, in some moral precepts, and innumerable absurd ceremonies. The magi, or priests, who probably derived some share of their influence from prac-

Religion of the Persians.

[28] See above, p. 250.

[29] Herodot. l. i. c. cxxii.

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tising those occult sciences afterwards distinguished by their name, were strongly protected by the authority of the prophet. "Though your good works," says the Sadder, "exceed the sands on the sea shore, or the stars of heaven, they will all be unprofitable, unless accepted by the priest, to whom you must pay tithes of all you possess, of your goods, of your lands, and of your money. The priests are the teachers of religion, they know all things, and deliver all men." Next to the priests, the royal family, and particularly the reigning prince, was the peculiar care of Zoroaster.[30] In their prayers and sacrifices, the Persians were not allowed to solicit individually for themselves the protection of Heaven, but only for the great king, and for the nation at large. In celebrating their religious worship, they employed neither altars, nor images, nor temples; they even derided the folly of such practices in others, probably (says Herodotus) not believing, like the Greeks, the nature of the gods to resemble that of men. On the summits of the highest mountains they sacrificed to the divinity; and the whole circle of the heavens they called God. They sacrificed, besides, to the elements, particularly fire, which they considered as the purest symbol, and most powerful agent, of the Divine Nature. They borrowed, however, the worship of some other divinities from the Assyrians and Arabians; for of all ancient nations, the Persians, according to Herodotus, were the

[30] For an account of Zoroaster and his residence Bactra, see History of the World, section ii.

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most disposed to adopt the customs of their neighbours. They soon preferred the dress, and, as an essential part of dress, the arms of the Medes to their own. When they became acquainted with the Greeks, they learned the worst and most unnatural of their vices. There was scarcely any absurdity, or any wickedness, which they might not imbibe from the licentious caprice, the universal corruption, and the excessive depravity of Babylon. The hardy and intrepid warriors, who had conquered Asia, were themselves subdued by the vices of that luxurious city. In the space of fifty-two years, which intervened between the taking of Babylon and the disgraceful defeat at Marathon, the sentiments as well as the manners of the Persians underwent a total change; and, notwithstanding the boasted simplicity of their religious worship, we shall find them thenceforth oppressed by the double yoke of despotism and superstition, whose combined influence extinguished every generous feeling, and checked every manly impulse of the soul. [36]

Their manners,

The tendency towards this internal decay was not perceived during the reign of Cyrus, whose extraordinary abilities enabled him to soften the rigours of despotism, without endangering his authority. He committed not the whole weight of government to the insolence of satraps, those proud substitutes of despotism, who were ever ready to betray their trust, and abuse their power. The inferior governors of towns and districts were appointed and removed by himself, to whom only

under Cyrus.

[36] Xenoph. de Instit. Cyri, l. iii. p. 238—243.

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they were accountable. By an institution, somewhat resembling the modern post, he provided for exact and ready information concerning the public occurrences in every part of his dominions. The vigilant shepherd of his people, he was always ready to hear their petitions, to redress their grievances, and to reward their merit. Nor did the love of ease or pleasure ever interfere with the discharge of his duty, in which he placed the greatest glory and happiness of his reign.[31]

Under Darius. Olymp. lxv. 4. A. C. 517. Resources and grandeur of that monarch.

His successors were universally distinguished by an exorbitant ambition, nourished by the immense resources of their empire, which under Darius amounted to fourteen thousand five hundred and sixty Eubœic talents, a sum equal to three millions six hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds sterling. Of this vast revenue, which, considering the value of money in ancient times, exceeded thirty millions at present, the Greek cities on the coast, together with the Carians, Lycians, and several other nations of Asia Minor, paid only the thirty-sixth part, a little more than an hundred thousand pounds. Besides this stated income, Darius might on every necessary occasion demand the money and services of his subjects. His predecessors were contented with voluntary contributions, and a militia. This prince established taxes, and a standing army. The number of his troops equalled the resources of his treasury; and both corresponded to the extent of his dominions, which

[31] Xenoph. ibid. p. 230.

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comprehended the greatest and most populous nations of the earth. The barbarity of the northern Scythians, and the pertinacious spirit of the European Greeks, the only enemies whom it remained for him to conquer, seemed feeble barriers against the progress of universal monarchy. In the extensive regions of Asia, every head bowed to the tiara of the great King, who in an annual progress through the central parts of his empire, spent the winter in the warm plains of Babylon; enjoyed the happy temperature of spring in the city of Susa, which adorned the flowery banks of the Eulæus; and avoided the summer heats in his spacious palace at Ecbatan, fanned by the refreshing breezes of the Median mountains. [32]

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His expedition into Scythia. Olymp. lxvi. 4. A. C. 513.

But Darius could not enjoy the splendour of his present greatness, while a single nation had merited his resentment, without feeling the weight of his vengeance. The wandering hordes of Scythia have been, in all ages, formidable to the civilised kingdoms of the East. Thrice before the reign of Darius the inhabitants of that frozen region had over-run the finest provinces of Asia. Fighting against these Barbarians, the founder of the Persian empire had lost his army and his life. It belonged to his warlike successor to punish the ferocity of that rude and uncultivated, but bold and high-minded people. With an army, it said, of seven hundred thousand men, Darius traversed Asia Minor,

[32] Xenoph. ibid. & Herodot. l. iii. c. 79. et seq.

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crossed the Thracian Bosporus, ravaged Thrace, and arrived on the banks of the Danube. Meanwhile a fleet of six hundred sail left the Asiatic coast, and passing the narrow seas which join the Ægæan to the Euxine, coasted in a northern direction to the shores of the latter, entered the mouth of the Danube, and sailed along that river until they joined the army. The Danube was passed by the usual expedient of a bridge of boats, which was built by the assistance of the fleet, composed chiefly of Grecians, who were left to guard the work of their hands against the dangers of the elements, and the destructive rage of the Barbarians.[33]

Loses great part of his army.

This formidable army, collected from so many distant provinces, boldly entered the vast uncultivated wilds of Scythia, in which they continued for five months, continually exposed to hunger and thirst, and the darts of the flying enemy. When they prepared to return from an expedition in which they had already lost the best part of their strength, their good fortune, rather than their prudence saved them from immediate destruction. It had been agitated among the Greeks, whether they ought not to demolish the bridge; a measure strongly recommended to them by the Scythian tribes, who having ravaged all the adjacent country, expected to revenge the invasion of the Persians, by confining them, without resource, in an inhospitable desert. Miltiades, an Athenian, descended from the heroic Ajax, eagerly embraced this proposal.

[33] Herodot. l. iv. c. 1. et seq.

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He was king, or tyrant, of the city of Cardia, situate near the neck of the Thracian Chersonnesus. There his uncle of the same name planted a Grecian colony, which uniting with the barbarous natives, formed a small community, the government of which descended to the son of his brother Cimon, who increased the population of the rising state by new inhabitants from Athens. The generous son of Cimon, though like all the princes of those parts, he held his authority under the protection of Darius, preferred the recovery of national independence to the preservation of personal dignity. The other chiefs of the Grecian cities listened with apparent pleasure to his arguments for destroying the bridge, and thus delivered themselves for ever from the yoke of Persia. Histiæus, tyrant of Miletus, was alone averse to this bold resolution. He observed to the little tyrants of the Asiatic Greeks, "that their own interest was intimately connected with the safety of Darius and his Persians. Under the auspicious influence of that powerful people, they each of them enjoyed royalty in their respective commonwealths: but should the empire of the Persians fall, (and what less could be expected from the destruction of Darius and his army?) the Greeks would immediately discover their partiality for republican government, banish their kings, and re-assume liberty. The opinion of Histiæus prevailed; the Persians repassed the Danube: but Miltiades, dreading their resentment, had previously retired to Athens, where,

Miltiades approves the advice of the Scythians for cutting off his retreat.

Histiæus, tyrant of Miletus, opposes this measure.

His opinion prevails. Olymp. lxvi. 4. A. C. 513.

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twenty-three years after the Scythian expedition, he enjoyed a more favourable opportunity of displaying his attachment to the cause of liberty, in the ever-memorable battle of Marathon.[34]

He accompanies Darius to Upper Asia.

If the public-spirited Athenian excited the hatred and revenge, the selfish tyrant of Miletus deserved the gratitude and the rewards of Darius. To continue the sovereign of his native city seemed a station below his merit; he was taken into the confidence of Darius, and accompanying him to Sardis, and afterwards to Susa, became the friend, counsellor, and favourite of the great King. While Histiæus acted such a distinguished part at the Persian court, his nephew Aristagoras, to whom he had committed the government of Miletus, incurred the displeasure of Artaphernes[35], the brother of Darius, and governor of Sardes. The representations of that minister, he well knew, would be sufficient to ruin him, both with his uncle, and with Darius, by whom he might be deprived not only of his authority, but of his life. Governed by these considerations, Aristagoras meditated a revolt[36], when a messenger unexpectedly arrived from Histiæus, exhorting him to that measure. The crafty Milesian, who disliked the restraint

[34] Herodot. l. iv. c. 1. et seq.

[35] Aristagoras had quarrelled with Megabetes, the kinsman of Artaphernes, (since both were of the blood royal,) during a fruitless expedition, in which they seem to have enjoyed a joint command, against the island of Naxos, one of the Cyclades. Herodot. l. iv. c. 28. et seq.

[36] Herodot. l. v. c. 36, 37.

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of a court, and the uncouth manners of the Persians, languished for an honourable pretence to return to his native country; and he saw not any means more proper for affording such an opportunity, than the tumults of the Greeks, which, as lieutenant of Darius, he would probably be sent to quell. His message confirmed the resolution of Aristagoras, who as the first act of rebellion against the Persians formally renounced all power over his fellow-citizens.[37]

His intrigues with Aristagoras; Olymp. lxix. 3. A. C. 502.

After giving this seemingly disinterested proof of his regard for the public, he erected the standard of freedom, which was soon surrounded by the flower of the Ionian youth; by whose assistance, traversing the whole coast, he abolished in every city the authority of kings, and proclaimed to all worthy to acquire it, the double blessing of civil liberty and national independence.[38]

who excites the Ionians to revolt from the Persian government.

The revolt thus happily effected, could not, however, be maintained without more powerful resources than the strength, the bravery, and the enthusiasm of the Asiatic Greeks. In order to resist the force of the Persian empire, which, it was easy to foresee, would soon be exerted in crushing their rebellion, it was necessary for the Ionians to obtain the protection and co-operation of their brethren in Europe. This important object was committed to the prudence and activity of Aristagoras, who having settled the affairs of the East, undertook, for the public service, an embassy into Greece.

Sails to Greece to crave assistance.

[37] Herodot. l. v. c. 36, 37. [38] Id. l. v. c. 38.

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His proceedings at Sparta.

Lacedæmon still continued, rather in name, however, than in reality, the most powerful state in that country. Though their government was, in strict language, of the republican kind, yet the Spartans sometimes bestowed an extraordinary authority on their kings. This degree of pre-eminence, more honourable than any that birth or fortune can bestow, the public esteem had conferred on Cleomenes. To him therefore Aristagoras, after arriving at Sparta, found it necessary to apply [39]; and in order to effect the object of his commission, he described to the Spartan king the immense wealth of the Persians, which they had neither virtue to enjoy, nor valour to defend. He painted in the warmest colours, the love of liberty which animated the Ionians, and their firm expectation that the Spartans would enable them to maintain that political independence, which their own laws taught them to consider as the most valuable of all human possessions. Their interest and their glory, he observed, were on this occasion most fortunately united: for how much greater glory might be acquired by conquering Asia, than by ravaging Greece? and how much easier would it be to defeat the light Persian archers, than to subdue the Arcadians or Argives, who knew, as well as the Spartans themselves, the use of the spear and buckler? Their journey to Susa, the rich capital of the great King, would be not only safe but delightful. To prove this, he pro-

[39] Herodot. l. v. c. 49. et seq.

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duced a brazen tablet, on which, it is said, were engraved all the countries, seas, and rivers of the ancient world. Pointing to the coast of Asia Minor, and the cities of the Ionians, with which Cleomenes was already acquainted, he showed him adjoining to these, the beautiful and rich country of Lydia. Next to the celebrated kingdom of Crœsus (he observed) extended the fertile fields of Phrygia, equally adapted to agriculture and pasturage. Beyond Phrygia lie the territories of the Cappadocians, whom the Greeks called white [39] Syrians. Farther towards the east dwell the wealthy Cilicians, who pay an annual tribute of five hundred talents to the king; next to them live the Armenians, abounding in cattle; and last of all the Matienians, bordering on the province of Cissia, and the flowery banks of the Choaspes [40], containing the superb city of Susa, and the invaluable treasury of Darius. This immense space is filled by well-inhabited countries, intersected by excellent roads, and supplied at proper distances with convenient places of refreshment and accommodation, even for a great army. Cleomenes having patiently listened to the verbose description of the Milesian, answered him with Laconic brevity, "in three days I will decide concerning the propriety of your demand." [41] At the expiration of that time, Aristagoras failed not to repair to the place

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[39] From the fairness of their complexions, compared with the more southern branches of the great Syrian nation.

[40] Otherwise called the Eulæus, as above, p. 353.

[41] Herodot. ibid.

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appointed, where he was soon met by the Spartan king, who asked him, in how many days they might march to Susa? Here the usual prudence of Aristagoras forsook him; for he ought not to have told the true distance, says Herodotus, if he had wished to engage the Spartans to accompany him. But he replied unguardedly, that travelling at the rate of about eighteen miles a day, they might reach Susa in three months. Upon this, Cleomenes, exclaimed with indignation, "Milesian stranger, you must be gone from Sparta before the setting of the sun; for you have made a very inauspicious and a very dangerous proposal, in advising the Spartans to undertake a journey of three months from the Grecian sea." With this severe reprimand he left Aristagoras, and immediately returned home. The artful Milesian, however, was not to be disconcerted by a first refusal. According to the custom of ancient times, when men endeavoured to paint to the eye the feelings of the heart, he cloathed himself in the garment of a suppliant, and sought protection in the house of Cleomenes. Having obtained the favour of a third audience, he attempted to effect by money what he could not accomplish by argument. But he found it as difficult to bribe, as it had been to persuade, the Spartan; and although he tempted him with the offer of above five thousand pounds in value (an immense sum in Greece in those days), it was impossible to render Cleomenes propitious to his design. [42]

His overtures rejected there.

[42] Herodot. l. v. c. 51.

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Aristagoras, thus ungenerously dismissed from Sparta, had recourse to the Athenians, from whom he had reason to expect a more favourable reception. Athens was the mother-country of the Ionians, who formed the greatest and most distinguished portion of the Asiatic Greeks. The Athenians, as a maritime state, had always maintained a closer connection than the Spartans with their distant colonies; and as they possessed, for that early age, a very considerable naval strength, they were not averse to a distant expedition. Besides these reasons, which at all times must have had no small influence on their councils, the present situation of their republic was peculiarly favourable to the cause of Aristagoras. The democratic form of polity gradually extended by the progressive spirit of freedom, had been defined by the laws of Solon, and confirmed by the unanimous approbation of the whole people. The public assembly, consisting of all citizens who had attained the age of manhood, was invested with the executive, as well as the legislative, powers of government. The nine archons were rather the ministers, than, as their name denotes, the governors of the republic. The senate, consisting first of four, and afterwards of five hundred members, was constituted by lot, the most popular mode of appointment. The court of the Areopagus, originally entrusted with the criminal jurisdiction, assumed an extensive controul over the behaviour and manners of the citizens. It consisted only of such magistrates as had discharged with appro-

He applies to Athens.

Constitution of that republic, as regulated by Solon. Olymp. xlvi. 3. A. C. 594.

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bation the duties of their respective offices. The members were named for life; and, as from the nature of the institution, they were persons of a mature age, of an extensive experience, and who, having already attained the aim, had seen the vanity of ambition, their characters admirably fitted them for restraining the impetuous passions of the multitude, and for stemming the torrent of popular frenzy. Such was the government[43] enjoyed by the Athenians, which they fondly regarded as the most perfect of all human institutions, and which was peculiarly endeared to them at present, by the recent recovery of freedom, after a long, though, in general, not a cruel tyranny.

Usurpation of Pisistratus. Olymp. l. 3. A. C. 578.

The danger of tyranny is an evil necessarily attending every democratical republic, in which, as there is not a proper separation between the legislative and executive powers, the assembly must often intrust to one man those functions of government, which the collective body of the people are sometimes unable, and always ill-qualified to exercise; and in which, therefore, the splendour of wealth may dazzle, the charms of eloquence may seduce, and the combined power of policy and prowess may intimidate

[43] I forbear treating fully of the Athenian government and laws, until the establishment of what was called the Athenian empire. During more than sixty years, that republic maintained dominion over many hundred cities and colonies. The fate of all these, as well as the measures of independent and hostile states, depended on the proceedings of the Athenians. Then, and not till then, a thorough acquaintance with the internal constitution and state of Athens will become necessary for explaining the historical transactions which we shall have occasion to record.

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and subdue the unsteady minds of the ignorant vulgar. The fame of his Olympic victories could not procure for Cylon[44] the sovereignty of Athens; and it is probable that many other unsuccessful candidates had aspired at this high object of ambition, before the arts and eloquence of Pisistratus, born, indeed, an Athenian citizen, but descended from the blood of ancient kings, obtained possession of the dangerous prize, which proved fatal to his family.

Expulsion of Hippias. Olymp. lxvii. 3. A. C. 510.

What his enterprising ability had acquired, his firmness, his wisdom, and his moderation[45] enabled him long to maintain. So completely was his authority established, that on his death the government descended, as a private inheritance, to his son. Resentment of a personal injury[46] delivered the Athenians from the mild tyranny[47] of Hipparchus; though his murderers, Harmodius and Aristogeiton, were afterwards celebrated by the Athenians, not as the avengers of a private quarrel, but as the restorers of public freedom.[48] His brother Hippias succeeding

[44] Thucyd. l. i. c. 126. Plut. in Solon.

[45] Plato in Hipparch. Herodot. Thucydid. i. 20. Aristot. Polit. l. v. c. 12.

[46] In this circumstance Plato agrees with Thucydides, whose account of the transaction differs widely from that of most other ancient writers. Thucydid. l. vi.

[47] Plato, p. 234. The orators Andocides and Isocrates agree with the philosopher. Meursius has made a careful collection of all the passages relating to the Pisistratidæ, in his Pisistratus.

[48] Αιει σφων κλεος εσσεται κατ' αιαν
Φιλταται Αρμοδιε και Αριστογειτων
Οτι τον τυραννον κτανετον
Ισονομους τ' Αθηνας εποιησατον. ALCÆUS.

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to the throne, treated his countrymen with a degree of severity which they had not hitherto experienced: his person and his government became alike odious; he was expelled by the assistance of the Lacedæmonians, and the general indignation of an injured people, after his family had, with various interruptions, governed Athens sixty-eight years.

A. C. 578—510.

Rapid success of the Athenians after the re-establishment of democracy.

A. C. 509—504.

The power of Athens was great in ancient times; but it became incomparably greater after the re-establishment of democracy.[49] So advantageous to the powers of the human mind is the enjoyment of liberty, even in its least perfect form, that in a few years after the expulsion of Hippias, the Athenians acquired an ascendant in Greece, which was fatal to their enemies, painful to their rivals, and even dangerous to themselves. They chastised the insolence of the islanders of Eubœa and Ægina, who contended with them in naval power; and humbled the pride of Thebes, which rivalled them in military glory. Favoured, as they fondly believed, by the protection of their tutelary Minerva, and animated as they strongly felt, by the possession of an equal freedom, they adorned their capital

"Your glory shall last for ever, most beloved Harmodius and Aristogeiton, because you slew the tyrant, and procured equal laws for Athens."

[49] This observation, which is literally translated, has weight, from such an old and honest historian as Herodotus. His words are still stronger in another passage: Δηλοι δε ε κατα εν μουον αλλα πανταχη ἡ ισηγορια ὡς εστι χρημα σπουδαιον, ει και Αθηναιοι τυραννευομενοι μεν, ουδεμιων των σφεας περιοικεοντων ησαν αμεινες, απαλλαχθεντες δε τυραννων, μακρῳ πρωτοι εγενοντο. Herodot. l. v. c. 78.

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with the richest spoils of their vanquished enemies. Their influence soon extended over the northern parts of Greece; and the fame of their power, still greater than their power itself, alarmed the fears and jealousy of the Peloponnesians. The Spartans, in particular, who had assisted them in restoring the democracy, now perceived the error of which they had been guilty, in promoting the greatness of an ambitious rival. In order to prevent[50] the dangerous consequences of their folly, they summoned to a congress all the allies in Peloponnesus, that their

Jealousy of the Peloponnesians.

[50] Besides this principal reason, the Spartans, and particularly their king Cleomenes, had private grounds for quarrel with the Athenians. The Alcmæonidæ, a powerful family, and rivals of the Pisistratidæ, had been banished Athens during the usurpation of the latter Having repeatedly tried, without success, to return by force, they at length had recourse to stratagem. The temple of Delphi having been destroyed by fire, they contracted with the Amphictyons for rebuilding it; and instead of employing Porine stone, agreeably to their contract, they built the whole front of Parian marble. This generosity gained them the good-will of the Amphictyons; bribery procured them the favour of the Pythia, or rather of the directors of the oracle; and the Lacedæmonians were commanded by Apollo to deliver Athens from tyrants. This was effected by Cleomenes, who, upon discovering the collusion between the oracle and the Alcmæonidæ, was moved with great resentment against Clisthenes, the head of that family by whom he and his country had been so shamefully deceived. He therefore united with Isagoras, the rival of Clisthenes. The latter, together with his partisans, were again banished from Athens. But the Athenians perceiving it to be the intention of the prevailing faction to establish an oligarchy, flew to arms. Cleomenes and Isagoras took refuge in the citadel. The third day they surrendered on capitulation. The Lacedæmonians were allowed to retire in safety. Isagoras was banished; many of his partisans executed; and the Alcmæonidæ, headed by Clisthenes, again returned in triumph. From this time democracy, in the strict sense of the word, continued, with short interruptions, to prevail in Athens. Herodot. l. v. c. 65. et seq. Thucyd. l. vi. c. 58.

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A. C. 504.

united wisdom might concert proper measures for resisting, ere it was too late, the encroachments of the Athenians, which threatened the liberties of all Greece. Their allies readily obeyed the welcome summons, and the deputies of the several states having assembled in the Spartan forum, eagerly listened to the speakers appointed to explain the intentions of that republic. The Lacedæmonian orators acknowledged the mistaken policy of their country in expelling from Athens the family of Pisistratus, and delivering the government of that city into the hands of a most ungrateful populace, who had since treated them with much indignity. "But why (they proceeded) should we relate private injuries? Have they not insulted all their neighbours? Does not their pride daily increase with their power? and is there not reason to dread, that their growing ambition may endanger, and at length destroy, the public safety? In order to prevent this evil, we have recalled Hippias from banishment. And let us, therefore, by our united efforts, reinstate the son of Pisistratus in that power and authority of which we most injudiciously deprived him."

Their design of restoring Hippias proves abortive.

The speech of the Lacedæmonians produced not the intended effect. The Peloponnesians, how jealous soever of the Athenian greatness, were still more jealous of the power of tyrants; and many of them, who had experienced the haughtiness of Sparta, were not dissatisfied with beholding a rival to that republic in the northern division of Greece. The other deputies ex-

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pressed their dissent by silent disapprobation; but Sosicles, the Corinthian, declared his sentiments at great length, in a speech which alike marks the manly character of the age, and the youthful dawn of Grecian eloquence. "Then surely, Lacedæmonians, will the heavens sink below the earth, and the earth tower sublime in the air; men will inhabit the depths of the sea, and fishes will take possession of the land, when you, formerly the bulwarks of liberty, shall demolish the popular governments of Greece, and establish tyrannies in their room, than which nothing can be more unjust or more pernicious." After this pompous exordium, the Corinthian proceeded to describe and exaggerate the calamities which his own countrymen had suffered from the usurpation of Cypselus, and his son Periander. Having related, at great length, the proud, cruel, and despotic actions of those princes, "Such," added he, "are the genuine fruits of absolute power; but I adjure you by the Grecian gods! attempt not to re-establish it in Athens. The Corinthians were seized with astonishment, when they heard that you had sent for Hippias; I myself was amazed at beholding him in this assembly; yet we never suspected that you purposed to restore him, in triumph, to his much-injured city. If you still persist in this fatal resolution, know that the Corinthians disavow all part in a design equally unjust and impious." [51] The other deputies listened with pleasure to the boldness of Sosicles, who expressed the senti-

[51] Herodot. l. v. c. 92.

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ments which they themselves felt, but which their respect for the Lacedæmonians obliged them to conceal. Hippias alone opposed the general voice of the assembly, attesting the same gods which his opponent had invoked, and prophesying, that at some future time the Corinthians would repent their present conduct, and regret their cruel injustice to the son of Pisistratus, when their own citizens, as well as the rest of Greece, should fatally experience the dangerous ambition of Athens. This remonstrance, which was so fully justified in the sequel, produced no immediate effect in the assembly; the Lacedæmonians finally yielded to the general request of their confederates, and abstained from their intended innovation in the government of a Grecian city.

Artaphernes commands the Athenians to reinstate Hippias. Olymp. lxix. 4. A. C. 501.

The dethroned prince, finding his cause universally abandoned by the Greeks, sought the protection of Artaphernes, the Persian governor of Sardes. Having acquired the confidence of this satrap, he represented to him the insolence, ingratitude, and perfidy of his countrymen, and the severest reproaches with which he loaded their character, gained ready belief with the Persian. The Athenians, who were informed of these intrigues, sent ambassadors to Sardes, in order to counteract them: but the resolution of Artaphernes was already taken; and he told the ambassadors, that if they consulted their safety, and would avoid the resentment of Persia, they must reinstate Hippias in the throne of his father. His answer had

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been reported to the Athenians, and the assembly had finally resolved to oppose the power of the greatest empire upon earth, rather than admit within their walls the declared enemy of their liberties. [52]

Aristagoras arrives in Athens. Olymp. lxx. 1. A. C. 500.

Precisely at this juncture, Aristagoras arrived at Athens, announced the revolt of the Asiatic Greeks from the government of Artaphernes, and solicited the assistance of the Athenians, in defending their own colonies against the oppressive violence of the common foe. Many arguments were not necessary to make the people of Athens adopt a measure which gratified their favourite passions. The eloquent Milesian, however, described the wealth and extent of Persia, the grandeur and populousness of its cities, and, above all, the slothful effeminacy and pusillanimous weakness of their inhabitants, who, unable to support the ponderous shield, or poise the manly lance, invited, as an easy prey, the victorious arms of a more warlike invader. The speech of Aristagoras was well fitted to excite the ambition and avarice of Athens. The assembly immediately decreed that assistance should be sent to Ionia. Twenty ships were fitted out with all convenient speed, which, reinforced by five more belonging to Eretria, a town of Eubœa, rendezvoused in the harbour of Miletus. [53]

The Athenians send twenty ships to assist their colonies.

Measures of the confederates. Olymp. lxx 1. A. C. 500.

Aristagoras spent not long time in his embassy to the other states of Greece, and soon met his Athenian allies at the place appointed. It was

[52] Herodot. ibid. c. xcvi.

[53] Ibid. l. v. c. xcvii.

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here determined, that while the commander in chief regulated the civil affairs of the Ionians, his brother Charopinus should conduct a military expedition against the wealthy capital of Lydia. The Athenians, desirous of testifying their resentment against the common enemy, and still more desirous of plunder, eagerly engaged in this undertaking. The united fleets left the harbour of Miletus, and sailed to Ephesus, where the troops were disembarked; and, in three days, accomplishing a journey of seventy miles, appeared before the gates of Sardes. The Persian governor little expected such a visit; his soldiers were not prepared to take the field; and the extensive walls of the city could not resist on all sides the strength of the besiegers. Artaphernes, therefore, contented himself with defending the citadel; while the Greeks, without opposition, entered Sardes, in order to plunder the accumulated wealth of that ancient capital. But an accident prevented them from reaping the fruits of their success. The resentment of a rapacious soldier, disappointed of his prey, set fire to the house of a Lydian, situate on the skirts of the town, which consisted, for the most part, of very combustible materials, the houses being all roofed, and many of them walled with cane; a mode of building doubly dangerous in that adust climate. The flames readily communicated from one house to another; and, in a short time, the whole circumference of the place was surrounded with a wall of fire. Sardes was built in the Grecian, not in the eastern

They take and burn Sardes.

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fashion[54], having, on the banks of the Pactolus, which intersected the town, a spacious square, which commonly served for the [55]market-place. Thither the Persians, driven from the extremities, betook themselves for refuge against the fury of the flames. CHAP. VIII.

Arms formed part of the dress of Barbarians[56]; and the Persians, who had assembled in the square without any intention of making defence, discovered their own strength to be more than sufficient to resist the enemy. Meanwhile the flames of Sardes brought the inhabitants from all parts of Lydia to their assistance. The Greeks were attacked, repelled, obliged to abandon their booty; and it was not without much difficulty that they effected their escape. Their retreat from Sardes was still more rapid than their march thither. It then appeared, that the taking and burning of the Lydian capital was no more than a stroke of military address, which succeeded because unforeseen, and of which the Greeks had not sufficient strength to avail themselves. The enemy collecting their whole force, pursued them to Ephesus, and defeated them with great slaughter, notwithstanding the vigorous resistance of the Athenians. The Eubœan auxiliaries also behaved with uncommon spirit, headed by their countryman Eualcides, whose Olympic victories had been highly extolled in

Are defeated in their retreat.

[54] We have already observed, that the Persians had not any Forum, or place of public resort.

[55] Herodot. l. v. c. ci. et seq.

[56] Thucydid. in proem.

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the verses of Simonides, and whose death on this occasion was long and deeply regretted.

Subsequent conduct of the confederates.

Bad fortune is commonly attended with dissensions in a confederate army. The allies threw the blame on each other, and the Athenians returned home in disgust, determined no longer to endanger [57] themselves for the sake of men who employed so little wisdom or valour in their own defence. The Ionians, though deserted by their allies, and defeated by the enemy at land, carried on the war vigorously by sea. Sailing northwards, they reduced Byzantium, and all the neighbouring cities on the Hellespont or Propontis. Their fleet then directed its course to Caria, and having become masters of the most considerable portion of that coast, defeated the Phœnicians off the isle of Cyprus. The military success of the Persians engaged them, on the other hand, to prosecute the war by land; and their subsequent operations discovered such a degree of prudence and courage as they seem never to have exerted on any future occasion. In order the more speedily to quash the hopes of the insurgents, they formed their numerous army into three divisions, allotting to each its particular department. After these separate brigades had reduced the smaller cities of the Eolians, Dorians, and Ionians, the three great branches of the Hellenic race, it was concerted that they should re-assemble in one body to attack Miletus, which was regarded as the centre of rebellion;

Vigorous measure of the Persians for crushing the rebellion.

[57] Herodot. ibid.

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and which, though properly an Ionic city, was considered, on account of its great strength and importance, rather as the metropolis of the whole country, than as the capital of a particular province. This plan, so judiciously concerted, was carried into execution by three sons-in-law of Darius, Hymees, Daurises, and Otanes; the first of whom reduced the Eolian cities; the second conquered the Dorians, as well as the other inhabitants of Caria[58]; while Otanes, assisted by the counsels and bravery of Artaphernes, over-ran the Ionic coast, burning and destroying all before him. The miserable natives were put to the sword, or dragged into captivity; the more fortunate escaped similar calamities, by flying to their ships, or taking refuge within the lofty walls of Miletus.[59]

They besiege Miletus. Olymp. lxxi. 3. A. C. 494.

The time now approached for attacking that place, which, as its harbour commanded the coast, it was necessary to invest by sea and land. We might, on this occasion, expect to find Aristagoras, the prime mover of the rebellion, displaying the fertile resources of his genius; but, before Miletus was besieged, Aristagoras was no more. The perfidious Ionian, who had persuaded not only his own countrymen, but all the Asiatic and many of the European Greeks, that

Aristagoras flies to Thrace;

[58] After the conquest seemed complete, Daurises was surprised and slain by Heraclides, a general of the Carians. But this disaster had no effect on the general fortune of the war. Herodot. l. v. c. cvi.

[59] Herodot. l. v. c. cvi. cvii. et seq.

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the public safety was the sole object of his concern, had never probably any other end in view but the success of his own selfish designs. When Cymé and Clazomené, two neighbouring towns of Ionia, had surrendered to the Persians, he thought it time to provide, by a speedy retreat, for his personal safety; and abandoning, in its greatest need, a country which he had involved in all the calamities of war, he fled with his numerous partizans to an obscure corner of Thrace, situated beyond the reach both of the Persians, from whom he had revolted, and of the Grecians, whom he had betrayed. But while he endeavoured to secure his establishment there, he provoked, by his cruelty, the despair of the natives, and, together with the companions of his perfidy, perished miserably by the hands of those fierce Barbarians, who thus revenged what happened to be for once the common cause of Greece and Persia.[60]

is slain there.

The intrigues of Histiæus.

About this time, Histiæus, the Milesian, the kinsman and friend of Aristagoras, arrived from Susa, commissioned by Darius to direct, by his experienced wisdom and perfect knowledge of the country, the valour and activity of the Persian generals. The birth, the education, the manners of this singular man, together with the strong partiality of every Greek in favour of his native land, might have afforded good reason to the Persian king to suspect his fidelity: he indeed suspected it; but the artful address, the

[60] Herodot. l. v. c. cxxiv. cxxv. cxxvi.

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warm professions, the subtle insinuation of Histiæus, easily overcame every prejudice which his situation and character made it natural to conceive against him. He was sent to assist the army of Darius, his benefactor, in crushing the Grecian rebellion; but his real intention was to take upon himself the conduct of that rebellion, and to raise his own greatness on the ruins of the Persian power. As he passed to the coast of Asia Minor, his intrigues produced a conspiracy at Sardes, which was discovered by the vigilance of Artaphernes, and occasioned the destruction of his accomplices. Histiæus made a seasonable retreat to the Ionian shore[61], where he hoped to be received with open arms by his ancient friends. But the Milesians, remembering his former tyranny, and the recent baseness of his nephew Aristagoras, shut their gates against him. He sought admission into Chios, but without better success. The Lesbians, with much difficulty, lent him eight vessels, which he employed against the enemy in the Euxine; but he was taken by the Persians, and crucified at Sardes, having performed nothing important towards changing the fortune of a war, which had been undertaken by his advice, and fomented by his ambition.[62]

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His death.

Meanwhile the Persian fleet and army surrounded the walls of Miletus. We are not informed of the exact number of their land forces, which, consisting of all the united garrisons in

The siege of Miletus continued.

[61] Herodot. l. v. c. ii. et seq.

[62] Herodot. ibid.

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those parts, must have greatly exceeded any strength which the much exhausted Greeks could bring into the field. Their fleet, composed of Phœnicians, Cilicians, and Egyptians, amounted to six hundred sail; besides a considerable naval force belonging to the isle of Cyprus, which, having co-operated during one year with the Ionian insurgents, had recently submitted to Darius. In order to deliberate concerning the means of opposing this mighty armament, the Grecians assembled in the Panionian council, where it was unanimously resolved, that no attempt should be made to resist the Persians by land: the citizens of Miletus alone were exhorted to defend their walls to the last extremity, under the conduct of Pythagoras, a person of great rank and eminence in their republic. While every effort should be exerted for maintaining this strong hold of Ionia, it was determined that the Grecian fleet, the last and only hope of the nation, should assemble at the small island of Ladé, ying off the harbour of Miletus, and offer battle to that of the [a]Persians. When all their forces were collected at the appointed rendezvous, they amounted to three hundred and fifty-three ships, which, containing each at a medium a complement of above two hundred men, made the whole amount to a number sufficiently respectable, and which, had they all remained firm and unanimous in the common cause, might perhaps have still rendered them victorious. Such at least was the opinion of the Persian com-

The Grecians determine to defend it to the last extremity;

and to oppose the enemy by sea.

[a] Herodot. l. vi. c. vi. et seq.

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manders, who, when informed of the strength of the Grecian fleet, despaired of conquering it by open force, and endeavoured to effect by policy what they could not accomplish by valour. Calling together the Ionian tyrants, who, after being expelled their dominions by Aristagoras, had taken refuge with the Medes, and actually followed the standard of Darius, they represented to those banished princes, that now was the time to shew their attachment to the service of the Great King. For this purpose, they were instructed, each of them, to persuade, by message or a personal interview, the subjects whom he had formerly commanded, to desert the Grecian confederacy; to acquaint them, that if they complied with this proposal, their houses and temples should be spared, while those of their more obstinate allies would be destroyed by the flames; that their republics should be treated with great lenity, and even received into favour; while their countrymen who resisted would inevitably be reduced into servitude, their youth disgraced by castration, their virgins transported to Bactria, to satisfy the lust of Barbarians, and their country, which contained every thing once dear to them, their temples, their statues, their oracles, and the tombs of their ancestors, bestowed on some more deserving and less rebellious people.

The Persians attempt to disunite them,

These insidious representations, however, produced not any immediate effect. Each community, believing that they alone were solicited to abandon the common cause, scorned, on account

without immediate effect.

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of their private advantage, to desert the general interest of the confederacy, and next day they called a council of war to consider of the means proper, not for appeasing the wrath, but for resisting the arms of the Persians.

The advice of Dionysius the Phocæan.

In this council, where no distinction of persons prevailed, every individual had full liberty to propose his opinion. That of Dionysius, a Phocæan, met with the approbation of the assembly. "Our fortunes," said he, "O Ionians! stand on "a needle's point. We must either vindicate "our liberty, or suffer the ignominious punish-"ment of fugitive slaves. If we refuse present "labour and danger, we shall be exposed to "eternal disgrace; but the toils of a few days "will be compensated by a life of freedom, of "glory, and of happiness. Submit, therefore, to "my direction, and I will pledge my life, that, "if the gods declare not against us, the enemy "will either decline the engagement, or, engag-"ing, be shamefully defeated." The Greeks, consenting to submit to the discipline of Dionysius, he every day arranged the fleet in three divisions: towards the east extended the right wing, consisting of eight ships of the Milesians, twelve belonging to Priené, and three which formed the whole strength of the small republic of Myus. The centre consisted of an hundred prime sailors furnished by the Chians, seventy from Lesbos, and a few ships sent by the little cities of Erythræa, Phocæa, and Teios. The Samians alone with sixty sail formed the left wing to the westward.

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In ancient times, the success of a naval engagement principally depended on the activity of the rowers and the skill of the pilots, whose object it always was to dart, with great violence, the sharp beak or prow of their own ships against the sides of the enemy. Sometimes at one stroke, more frequently by repeated assaults, while they themselves, with wonderful dexterity, eluded such a shock, they shattered or sunk the vessel of their opponents. By their continual exercise in navigation, the Greeks had acquired such proficiency in managing their galleys, that their movement depending, not on the external impulse of the wind, but on the active principle within, resembled the rapid motion of a fish in its native element. Constant practice, however, was necessary to maintain this superiority, and still more to preserve their bodies in a capacity for labour, which, on account of the softness of the climate, and the heat of the season, were ready to melt away in sloth and debility. The prudent Phocæan, therefore, commanded them often to change their stations, habituating the sailors to the labour of the oar, and the restraints of discipline, which he assured them would, by habit, become easy and agreeable. For seven days they cheerfully obeyed his commands; but at length the warmth of the season rendered their exertions too great for their strength. Distempers broke out in the fleet. The Greeks, always averse to every shadow of absolute authority, complained at first in secret murmurs, and afterwards in licentious clamours,

His regulations observed for a while;

but discontinued.

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of the intolerable hardships imposed on them by the severity of an insolent Phocæan, who, though he brought only three ships to the common defence, had assumed an arbitrary direction in all their affairs. Governed by these sentiments, they refused any longer to obey his commands, landed on the shore of Ladé, formed a camp on the island, and, sitting under the shade of their tents, disdained the useful labours to which they had hitherto submitted.

The Greeks defeated in a sea fight.

The Samians, who saw and dreaded the consequence of this general disorder, privately accepted the proposal which had been made them by the Persians. Their perfidy brought destruction on the common cause; for, in the engagement which followed soon after, they hoisted sail and deserted the line. The Lesbians followed their example. Among those, however, who obtained immortal honour, by adhering to the cause of Greece, were eleven captains of Samian vessels, who detested the treachery of their companions, and despised the signals of their admirals; on which account they were rewarded, at their return, by the community of Samos, with a pillar and inscription, transmitting their names, with eternal renown, to posterity. But, of all the Greeks, the Chians acquired greatest glory on that memorable day: notwithstanding their inferior strength, they defended themselves to the last extremity, and rendered the victory late and dear to the Persians. The naval defeat was soon followed by the taking of Miletus, which surrendered in the sixth year

Miletus taken.

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from the commencement of the revolt. The Persians made good the threats which they had denounced against the obstinacy of their enemies. Samos alone, at the price of its perfidy, obtained the safety of its houses and temples. Those of all the other communities were burnt to the ground. The women and children were dragged into captivity. Such of the Milesian citizens as escaped not by flight, were either put to the sword, or carried into the heart of Asia, and finally settled in the territory of Ampé, near the mouth of the Tygris. In other places, men of a timid or melancholy complexion continued to brood over the ruins of their ancient seats. The more enterprising sailed to Greece, to the coast of Italy and Sicily, and to the Greek colonies in Africa. Probably not a few betook themselves to piracy, among whom was Dionysius the Phocæan, who plundered the Tuscan and Carthaginian vessels, always sparing the Grecian. The Persian fleet wintered at Miletus, and next spring subdued the islands of Chios, Lesbos, and Tenedos.[61] Thus were the Asiatic Greeks conquered for the third time, once by the Lydians, and twice by the Persians.

Olymp. lxxi. 3. A. C. 494. Dispersion of the Greeks, and desolation of their country.

But notwithstanding these repeated shocks, which subjected the inhabitants of Ionia to such dreadful calamities, that delightful country soon recovered its ancient populousness and splendour. The Persian government, having sufficiently punished the rebellion, gradually relented. The Ionians became an object of care

Ionia begins to flourish under the Persian government.

[61] Herodot. l. vi. c. xxxi. et seq.

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and protection to Darius. Useful regulations were made for maintaining the public peace, as well as for securing the lives and properties of individuals. The face of the country began once more to smile; the cities being built of slight materials, were easily repaired, while the exuberant fertility of the soil, the attractive beauties of the prospect, the charms of the climate, and the convenience of the harbours (an advantage of which the Persians knew not how to avail themselves), speedily collected the Greeks into their ancient habitations. Even those places which had been deserted or destroyed, emerged from the gloom of desolation, and assumed the cheerful appearance of industrious activity. And such was the attachment of the Greeks to their native land, and such their ambition to adorn it, that the labour of a few years repaired the destructive ravages of the Barbarians.

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Resentment of Darius against Greece.—Maritime Expedition of Mardonius.—Invasion of Greece by Datis and Artaphernes.—Battle of Marathon.—Transactions in the Interval between that Battle and Xerxes's Invasion. — The Invasion of Xerxes. — Battle of Thermopylæ.

CHAP. IX.

Introduction to the history of the Persian invasion.

In attempting to give the reader a general, but tolerably complete, view of the ancient history of Greece, it was often necessary to have recourse to very obscure materials; to arrange and combine the mutilated fragments of poets and mythologists; and to trace, by the established principles of critical conjecture, and the certain, because uniform, current of human passions, those events and transactions which seem most curious and important. In this subsequent part of my work, the difficulty consists, not in discovering, but in selecting, the materials; for the magnificent preparations, the splendid commencement, and the unexpected issue, of the Persian war, have been related with the utmost accuracy of description, and adorned by the brightest charms of eloquence. The Grecian poets, historians, and orators, dwell with complacence on a theme, not less important than extensive, and equally adapted to display their own abilities, and to flatter the pride of

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their country. The variety of their inimitable performances, generally known and studied in every country conversant with literature, renders the subject familiar to the reader, and difficult to the writer. Yet does the merit of those performances, however justly and universally admired, fall short of the extraordinary exploits which they describe; exploits which, though ancient, still preserve a fresh and unfading lustre and will remain, to the latest ages, precious monuments of that generous magnanimity which cherishes the seeds of virtue, inspires the love of liberty, and animates the fire of patriotism.

Subject divided into three acts.

The memorable tragedy (to adopt on this occasion an apt allusion of Plutarch), which ended in the eternal disgrace of the Persian name, may be divided with propriety into three principal acts. The first contains the invasion of Greece by Darius's generals, Datis and Artaphernes, who were defeated in the battle of Marathon. The second consists in the expedition undertaken ten years afterwards by Xerxes, the son and successor of Darius, who fled precipitately from Greece, after the ruin of his fleet near the isle of Salamis. The third, and concluding act, is the destruction of the Persian armies in the bloody fields of Mycalé and Platea; events concurring on the same day, and which happened nearly two years after Xerxes's triumphal entry into Greece.

Olymp. lxxii. 3. A. C. 490.

Olymp. lxxv. 1. A. C. 480.

Olymp. lxxv. 2. A. C. 479.

Darius's resentment against the Athenians.

The complete reduction of the insurgents on the Asiatic coast, prompted Darius to take vengeance on such Greeks as had encouraged and assisted the

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unsuccessful rebellion of his subjects. The proud monarch of the East, when informed that the citizens of Athens had co-operated with the Ionians in the taking and burning of Sardis, discovered evident marks of the most furious resentment: shooting an arrow into the air, he prayed that Heaven might assist him in punishing the audacious insolence of that republic; and every time he sat down to table, an attendant reminded him of the Athenians, lest the delights of eastern luxury should seduce him from his fell purpose of revenge.[1] CHAP. IX.

Unfortunate expedition of Mardonius; Olymp. lxxi. 4. A. C. 493.

The execution of his design was entrusted to Mardonius, a Persian nobleman of the first rank, whose personal as well as hereditary advantages, had entitled him to the marriage of Artazostra daughter of Darius; and whose youth and inexperience were compensated, in the opinion of his master, by his superior genius for war, and innate love of glory. In the second spring after the cruel punishment of the Ionians, Mardonius approached the European coast with an armament sufficient to inspire terror into Greece. The rich island of Thasus, whose golden mines are said to have yielded a revenue of nearly three hundred talents, submitted to his fleet; while his land forces added the barbarous province of Macedon to the Persian empire. But having steered southward from Thasus, the whole armament was overtaken by a storm, and almost wholly destroyed, while endeavouring to double

who loses the greatest part of his fleet.

[1] Herodot. l. v. c. 105 et seq.

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the promontory of mount Athos, which is connected with the Macedonian shore by a low and narrow neck of land, but forms a long and lofty ridge in the sea. Three hundred vessels were dashed against the rocks; twenty thousand men perished in the waves. This disaster totally defeated the design of the expedition: and Mardonius, having recovered the shattered remains of the fleet and army, returned to the court of Persia, where, by flattering the pride, he averted the resentment of Darius; while he represented, that the Persian forces, invincible by the power of man, had yielded to the fury of the elements; and while he described and exaggerated, to the astonishment and terror of his countrymen, the excessive cold, the violent tempests, the monstrous marine animals, which distinguished and rendered formidable those distant and unknown seas.[2]

Succeeded by Datis and Artaphernes. Olymp. lxxii. 3. A.C. 490.

The address of Mardonius rescued him from punishment; but his misfortunes removed him from the command of Lower Asia. Two generals were appointed in his room, of whom Datis, a Mede, was the more distinguished by his age and experience, while Artaphernes, a Persian, was the more conspicuous for his rank and nobility, being descended of the royal blood, and son to Artaphernes, governor of Sardes, whose name has frequently occurred in the present history. That his lieutenant might appear with a degree of splendour suitable to the majesty of Persia, Darius assembled an army

[2] Herodot. l. vi. c. 43. et seq.

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Their armament and views.

of five hundred thousand men[3], consisting of the flower of the provincial troops of his extensive empire. The preparation of an adequate number of transports and ships of war, occasioned but a short delay. The maritime provinces of the empire, Egypt, Phœnicia, and the coasts of the Euxine and Ægæan seas, were commanded to fit out, with all possible expedition, their whole naval strength: the old vessels were repaired, many new ones were built, and in the course of the same year in which the preparations commenced, a fleet of six hundred sail was ready to put to sea. This immense armament the Persian generals were ordered to employ in extending their conquests on the side of Europe, in subduing the republics of Greece, and more particularly in chastising the insolence of the Eretrians and Athenians, the only nations which had conspired with the revolt of the Ionians, and assisted that rebellious people in the destruction of Sardes. With respect to the other nations which might be reduced by his arms, the orders of Darius were general, and the particular treatment of the vanquished was left to the discretion of his lieutenants; but concerning the Athenians and Eretrians, he gave the most positive commands, that their territories should be laid waste, their houses and temples burned or demolished, and their persons carried into captivity to the eastern

[3] Besides Herodotus, Plutarch, and Diodorus Siculus, this expedition is related by Lysias, Orat. Funeb. Isocrat. Panegyr. Plato, Menex. Pausan. l. x. c. 20. Justin. l. ii. c. 9. Corn. Nepos. in Milt.

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CHAP. IX. extremities of his empire. Secure of effecting their purpose, his generals were furnished with a great number of chains for confining the Grecian prisoners; a haughty presumption (to use the language of antiquity) in the superiority of a man over the power of fortune, which on this, as on other occasions, was punished by the just vengeance of Heaven.

They reduce the Cyclades,

The Persian fleet enjoyed a prosperous voyage to the isle of Samos, from whence they were ready to proceed to the Athenian coast. The late disaster which befel the armament commanded by Mardonius, deterred them from pursuing a direct course along the shores of Thrace and Macedonia: they determined to steer in an oblique line through the Cyclades, a cluster of seventeen small islands, lying opposite to the territories of Argos and Attica. The approach of such an innumerable host, whose transports darkened the broad surface of the Ægæan, struck terror into the unwarlike inhabitants of those delightful islands. The Naxians took refuge in their inaccessible mountains; the natives of Delos, the favourite residence of Latona and her divine children, abandoned the awful majesty of their temple, which was overshadowed by the rough and lofty mount Cynthus. Paros[4],

[4] The marble of Paros was superior in whiteness, and the fineness of its grain, to the hard sparkling veins of mount Pentelicus in Attica; which, from the size and brilliancy of its component particles, somewhat resembling salt, is called by the Italians *marmo salino*. These two kinds of marble were always the most valued by the Greeks; but the marble of Paros was preferred by artists, as yielding more easily to the graving-tool, and on account of the homogene-

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famous for its marble; Andros[5], celebrated for its vines; Ceos, the birth-place of the plaintive Simonides; Syros, the native country of the ingenious and philosophic Pherecydes; Ios, the tomb of Homer[6]; the industrious Amorgos[7]; as well as all the other[8] islands which surrounded the once sacred shores of Delos, either spontaneously offered the usual acknowledgment of earth and water, as a testimony of their friendship, or submitted, after a feeble resistance, to the Persian arms.[9] CHAP. IX.

The invaders next proceeded westward to the isle of Eubœa, where, after almost a continued engagement of six days, their strength and numbers, assisted by the perfidy of two traitors, finally prevailed over the valour and obstinacy of the Eretrians.[10] and Eubœa;

ousness of its parts, less apt to sparkle, and give false lights to the statue. The works of Parian marble, in the Farnesian palace at Rome, are mentioned by Winkelman, Geschichtender kunst des Alterthums, l. i. c. 2.

[5] The wines of Andros and Naxos were compared to Nectar. See Athenæus, l. i.

[6] Strabo, l. x. & Plin. l. iv. Pausanias (in Phocic.) says, that Climenes, the mother of Homer, was a native of the isle of Ios; and Aulus Gellius, l. iii. asserts, on the authority of Aristotle, that this island was the birth-place of Homer himself.

[7] Amorgos was long famous for the robes made there, and distinguished by its name. Suid. ad voc. They were dyed red, with a species of lichen which abounds in that island, and which was formerly used by the English and French in dying scarlet.

[8] Herodot. l. vi. c. 94. [9] Id. ibid. c. 101. et seq.

[10] The present deplorable state of these once fortunate islands may be seen in Tournefort, the most learned of travellers. Despotism, a double superstition, (the Grecian and Mahommedan,)

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invade Attica.

Hitherto every thing was prosperous; and had the expedition ended with the events already related, it would have afforded to the great King just matter of triumph. But a more difficult task remained, in the execution of which the Persians (happily for Europe) experienced a fatal reverse of fortune. After the reduction of Eubœa, the Athenian coasts, separated from that island only by the narrow strait of Euripus, seemed to invite the generals of Darius to an easy conquest. They readily accepted the invitation, as the punishment of Athens was the main object which their master had in view when he fitted out his seemingly invincible armament. The measures which they adopted for accomplishing this design appear abundantly judicious: the greater part of the army was left to guard the islands which they had subdued; the useless multitude of attendants were transported to the coast of Asia; with an hundred thousand chosen infantry, and a due proportion of horse, the Persian generals set sail from Eubœa, and safely arrived on the *Marathonian shore*, a district of Attica about thirty miles from the capital, consisting chiefly of level ground, and therefore admitting the operations of cavalry, which formed the main strength of the Barbarian army, and with which the Greeks were very poorly provided. Here the Persians

pirates, banditti, and pestilence, have not yet depopulated the Cyclades, which respectively contain three, five, ten, and the largest twenty thousand inhabitants.

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pitched their camp, by the advice of Hippias, the banished king of Athens [11], whose perfect knowledge of the country, and intimate acquaintance with the affairs of Greece, rendered his opinion on all occasions respectable.

The Athenians take measures for their defence.

Meanwhile the Athenians had raised an army, and appointed ten generals, with equal power, chosen, as usual, from the ten tribes, into which the citizens were divided. Their obstinate and almost constant hostilities with the Phocians, the Thebans, and their other northern neighbours, prevented them from entertaining any hopes of assistance from that quarter: but, on the first appearance of the Persian fleet they sent a messenger to Sparta, to acquaint the senate of that republic with the immediate danger that threatened them, and to explain how much it concerned the interest, as well as the honour of the Spartans, who had acquired just pre-eminence among the Grecian states, not to permit the destruction of the most ancient and the most splendid of the Grecian cities. The senate and assembly approved the justice of this demand: they collected their troops, and seemed ready to afford their rivals, whose danger now converted them into allies, a speedy and effectual relief. But it was only the ninth day of the month; and an ancient, unaccountable, and therefore the more respected, superstition prevented the Spartans from taking the field, before the full of the moon. [12] When that period should arrive, they

Demand assistance from Sparta.

[11] Thucyd. l. vi. c. 59. Herodot. ubi supra.

[12] Strabo, l. ix. p. 611.; and Herodot. ibid.

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promised to march, with the utmost expedition, to the plains of Marathon.

Reinforced by the Platæans.

Meanwhile the Athenians had been reinforced by a thousand chosen warriors from Platæa, a small city of Bœotia, distant only nine miles from Thebes. The independent spirit of the Platæans rendered them as desirous of preserving their freedom, as they were unable to defend it against the Theban power. But that invaluable possession, which their own weakness would have made it necessary for them to surrender, the protection of Athens enabled them to maintain, and in return for this inestimable favour, they discovered towards their benefactors, on the present as well as on every future occasion, the sincerest proofs of gratitude and respect. The Athenian army, now ready to take the field, consisted of about ten thousand freemen, and of probably a still greater number of armed slaves. The generals might certainly have collected a larger body of troops; but they seem to have been averse to commit the safety of the state to the fortune of a single engagement; neither would it have been prudent to leave the walls of Athens, and the other fortresses of Attica, altogether naked and defenceless. It had been a matter of deliberation in the assembly, whether they ought not to stand a siege rather than venture a battle. The Athenian fortifications, indeed, had not attained that strength which they afterwards acquired, yet they might have long resisted the artless assaults of the Persians; or had the latter got possession of the walls, the

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long, narrow, and winding streets[13] of Athens would have enabled a small number of men to make an obstinate, and perhaps a successful defence, against a superior but less determined enemy. But all hopes from this mode of resistance were damped by the consideration, that an immense host of Persians might surround their city on every side, intercept their supplies, and, instead of conquering them by assault, reduce them by famine. At the same time Miltiades, one of the ten generals, whose patriotism and love of liberty we have already had occasion to applaud, animated his countrymen with the desire of victory and glory. This experienced commander knew the Persians: he knew his fellow-citizens; and his discerning sagacity had formed a proper estimate of both.

The Athenians encouraged by Miltiades to risk a battle.

The Athenians were few in number, but chosen men; their daily practice in the gymnastic had given them agility of limbs, dexterity of hand, and an unusual degree of vigour both of mind and body. Their constant exercise in war had inured them to hardship and fatigue, accustomed them to the useful restraints of discipline, and familiarised them to those skilful evolutions which commonly decide the fortune of the field. Their defensive as well as offensive armour was remarkably complete; and an acknowledged pre-eminence over their neighbours, had inspired them with a military enthusiasm, which on this occasion was doubly animated, in defence of

His motives explained in the military character of the Athenians,

[13] Aristotle informs us, that this was the ancient mode of building in all the cities of Greece. Aristot. Polit.

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their freedom and of their country. In their pertinacious struggles with each other, for whatever men hold most precious, the Greeks, and the Athenians in particular, had adopted a mode of military arrangement which cannot be too highly extolled. Drawn up in a close and firm phalanx, commonly sixteen deep, the impetuous vigour of the most robust youth held the first ranks; the last were closed by the steady courage of experienced veterans, whose resentment against cowardice seemed more terrible to their companions than the arms of an enemy. As the safety of the last ranks depended on the activity of the first, their united assaults were rendered alike furious and persevering, and hardly to be resisted by any superiority of numbers. [14]

[14] The attention given by the Greeks to the relative dispositions of the ranks, according to the respective qualities of the men who composed them, introduced certain rules in ancient tactics, which would be unnecessary in the modern. To convert the rear into the front, a modern army has only to face about, because it is not very material in what order the ranks are placed. But we learn from the tactics of Arrian, that the Greeks had contrived three other ways of attaining this purpose, in all of which the same front was uniformly presented to the enemy. — The first was called the *Macedonian*. In this evolution the file-leader faced to the right-about, without stirring from his place; the other men in the file passed behind him, and, after a certain number of paces, also faced about, and found themselves in their respective places. — The second was called the *Cretan*. In this, the file-leader not only faced about, but paced over the depth of the phalanx; the rest followed him, and the whole found themselves in the same place as before, the ranks only reversed. — The third was called the *Lacedæmonian*, which was precisely the opposite of the first. In the Lacedæmonian evolution the bringer-up, or last man in each file, whom the Greeks called *ουραγος*, faced about, then halted. The file-leader faced

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The Persians (for under the name of Persians are comprehended the various nations which followed the standard of Datis and Artaphernes) were not deficient in martial appearance, nor perhaps entirely destitute of valour, being selected with care from the flower of the Asiatic provinces. But, compared with the regularity of the Greek battalions, they may be regarded as a promiscuous crowd, armed in each division with the peculiar weapons of their respective countries, incapable of being harmonised by general movements, or united into any uniform system of military arrangement. Darts and arrows were their usual instruments of attack; and even the most completely armed trusted to some species of missile weapon. They carried in their left hands light targets of reed or osier, and their bodies were sometimes covered with thin plates of scaly metal; but they had not any defensive armour worthy of being compared with the firm corslets, the brazen greaves, the massy bucklers of their Athenian opponents. The bravest of

about, and paced over twice the depth of the phalanx, the rest following him; the whole thus found themselves with the same front towards the enemy, the ranks only reversed. The difference between these three evolutions consisted in this, that the Macedonian, where the file-leader stood still, and the rest went behind him, had the appearance of a retreat; since the whole line receded by the depth of the phalanx from the enemy: in the Cretan, the men preserved the same ground which they had originally occupied; but the Lacedæmonian carried the whole line by the depth of the phalanx, forward on the enemy. Among the first military changes introduced by Philip of Macedon, historians mention his adoption of the Lacedæmonian evolution, for changing the front, in preference to that formerly used by his own countrymen.

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the Barbarians fought on horseback; but in all ages the long Grecian spear has proved the surest defence against the attack of cavalry, insomuch that even the Romans, in fighting against the Numidian horsemen, preferred the strength of the phalanx to the activity of the legion. The inferiority of their armour, and of their discipline, was not the only defect of the Persians: they wanted that ardour and emulation, which, in the close and desperate engagements of ancient times, were necessary to animate the courage of a soldier. Their spirits were broken under the yoke of a double servitude, imposed by the blind superstition of the Magi, and the capricious tyranny of Darius; with them their native country was an empty name; and their minds, degraded by the mean vices of wealth and luxury, were insensible to the native charms, as well as the immortal reward of manly virtue.

Prudent conduct of Miltiades.

Miltiades allowed not, however, his contempt of the enemy, or his confidence in his own troops, to seduce him into a fatal security. Nothing on his part was neglected; and the only obstacle to success was fortunately removed by the disinterested moderation of his colleagues. The continual dread of tyrants had taught the jealous republicans of Greece to blend, on every occasion, their civil with their military institutions. Governed by this principle, the Athenians, as we already had occasion to observe, elected ten generals, who were invested, each in his turn, with the supreme command. This regulation was extremely unfavourable to that unity of de-

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sign which ought to pervade all the connected operations of an army; an inconvenience which struck the discerning mind of Aristides, who on this occasion displayed the first openings of his illustrious character. The day approaching when it belonged to him to assume the successive command, he generously yielded his authority [15] to the valour and experience of Miltiades. The other generals followed this magnanimous example, sacrificing the dictates of private ambition to the interest and glory of their country; and the commander in chief thus enjoyed an opportunity of exerting, uncontrouled, the utmost vigour of his genius.

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Generous patriotism of Aristides.

Lest he should be surrounded by a superior force, he chose for his camp the declivity of a hill, distant about a mile from the encampment of the enemy. The intermediate space he caused to be strewed in the night with the branches and trunks of trees, in order to interrupt the motion, and break the order of the Persian cavalry, which in consequence of this precaution, seem to have been rendered incapable of acting in the engagement. In the morning his troops were drawn up in battle array, in a long and full line; the bravest of the Athenians on the right, on the left the warriors of Platæa, and in the middle the slaves [16], who had been admitted on this oc-

Disposition of both armies.

[15] Plutarch. in Aristid. tom. ii. p. 489.

[16] There is not any historian, indeed, who makes mention of this arrangement, although, by comparing the accounts of the havoc made in the centre, with the small number of Athenian citizens who were slain, it is evident that the slaves must have been the greatest sufferers in the action, and therefore posted as is said in the text.

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casion to the honour of bearing arms. By weakening his centre, the least valuable part, he exended his front equal to that of the enemy: his rear was defended by the hill above mentioned, which, verging round to meet the sea, likewise covered his right; his left was flanked by a lake or marsh. Datis, although he perceived the skilful disposition of the Greeks, was yet too confident in the vast superiority of his numbers to decline the engagement, especially as he now enjoyed an opportunity of deciding the contest before the enemy's reinforcements could arrive from Peloponnesus. When the Athenians saw their adversaries in motion, they ran down the hill with unusual ardour to encounter them; a circumstance which proceeded, perhaps from their eagerness to engage, but which must have been attended with the good consequence of shortening the time of their exposure to the slings and darts of the Barbarians.

Defeat of the Persians in the battle of Marathon; Olymp. lxxii. 3. A. C. 490.

The two armies closed; the battle was rather fierce than obstinate. The Persian sword and Scythian hatchet penetrated, or cut down, the centre of the Athenians; but the two wings which composed the main strength of the Grecian army, broke, routed, and put to flight the corresponding divisions of the enemy. Instead of pursuing the vanquished, they closed their extremities, and attacked the Barbarians who had penetrated their centre. The Grecian spear overcame all opposition: the bravest of the Persians perished in the field; the remainder were pursued with great slaughter; and such

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was their terror and surprise, that they sought for refuge not in their camp, but in their ships. The banished tyrant of Athens fell in the engagement: two Athenian generals, and about two hundred citizens, were found among the slain: the Persians left six thousand of their best troops on the scene of action. Probably a still greater number were killed in the pursuit. The Greeks followed them to the shore; but the lightness of the Barbarian armour favoured their escape. Seven ships were taken; the rest sailed with a favourable gale, doubled the cape of Sunium; and, after a fruitless attempt to surprise the harbour of Athens, returned to the coast of Asia. [17]

who sail to Asia.

The loss and disgrace of the Persians, on this memorable occasion, was compensated by only one consolation. They had been defeated in the engagement, compelled to abandon their camp, and driven ignominiously to their ships; but they carried with them to Asia their Eretrian prisoners, who, in obedience to the orders of Darius, were safely conducted to Susa. These unhappy men had every reason to dread being made the victims of royal resentment; but when they were conducted in chains to the presence of the great King, their reception was very different from what their fears naturally led them to expect. Whether reflection suggested to Darius the pleasure which he might derive in peace, and the assistance which he might receive in war, from the arts and arms of the Eretrians, or that

Unexpected treatment of the Eretrians.

[17] Herodot. l. vi. c. 111. et seq.

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a ray of magnanimity for once enlightened the soul of a despot, he ordered the Greeks to be immediately released from captivity, and soon afterwards assigned them for their habitation the fertile district of Anderica, lying in the province of Cissia in Susiana, at the distance of only forty miles from the capital. There, the colony remained in the time of Herodotus, preserving their Grecian language and institutions; and after a revolution of six centuries, their descendants were visited by Apollonius Tyaneus[18], the celebrated Pythagorean philosopher, and were still distinguished from the surrounding nations by the indubitable marks of European extraction.

Obstacles to the second invasion of Greece.

When any disaster befel the Persian arms, the great, and once independent, powers of the empire were ever ready to revolt. The necessity of watching the first symptoms of those formidable rebellions gradually drew the troops of Darius from the coast of Lesser Asia; whose inhabitants, delivered from the oppression of foreign mercenaries, resumed their wonted spirit and activity; and except in paying, conjunctly with several neighbouring provinces, an annual contribution of about an hundred thousand pounds, the Asiatic Greeks were scarcely subjected to any proof of dependence. Disputes concerning the succession to the universal empire of the East, the revolt of Egypt, and the death of Darius, retarded for ten years the resolution formed by that prince, and adopted by his son and successor Xerxes, of restoring the lustre of the Persian arms,

[18] Philostrat. in Vit. Apollon.

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not only by taking vengeance on the pertinacious obstinacy of the Athenians, but by effecting the complete conquest of Europe.[19] We shall presently have occasion to describe the immense preparations which were made for this purpose; but it is necessary first to examine the transactions of the Greeks, during the important interval between the battle of Marathon and the expedition of Xerxes; and to explain the principal circumstances which enabled a country, neither wealthy nor populous, to resist the most formidable invasion recorded in history.

The sentiments and behaviour of the Athenians in consequence of their victory.

The joy excited among the Athenians by a victory, which not only delivered them from the dread of their enemies, but raised them to distinguished pre-eminence among their rivals and allies, is evident from a remarkable incident which happened immediately after the battle. As soon as fortune had visibly declared in their favour, a soldier was dispatched from the army to convey the welcome news to the capital. He ran with incredible velocity, and appeared, covered with dust and blood, in the presence of the senators. Excess of fatigue conspired with the transports of enthusiasm to exhaust the vigour of his frame. He had only time to exclaim in two words, *Rejoice with the victors*[20], and immediately expired.

It is probable that the same spirit which animated this nameless patriot, was speedily diffused through the whole community; and the Athenian

[19] Herodot. l. vii. c. 1. & 2.

[20] Χαιρετε, χαιρομεν.

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institutions were well calculated to keep alive the generous ardour which success had inspired. Part of the spoil was gratefully dedicated to the gods; the remainder was appropriated as the just reward of merit. The obsequies of the dead were celebrated with solemn pomp; and, according to an ancient and sacred custom, their fame was commemorated by annual returns of festive magnificence.[21] The honours bestowed on those who had fallen in the field, reflected additional lustre on their companions who survived the victory. In extensive kingdoms, the praise of successful valour is weakened by diffusion; and such too is the inequality between the dignity of the general and the meanness of the soldier, that the latter can seldom hope to attain, however well he may deserve, his just proportion of military fame.[22] But the Grecian republics were small; a perpetual rivalship subsisted among them; and when any particular state eclipsed the glory of its neighbours, the superiority was sensibly felt by every member of the commonwealth.

Honours bestowed on Miltiades;

That pre-eminence, which by the battle of Marathon Athens acquired in Greece, Miltiades, by his peculiar merit in this battle, attained in Athens. His valour and conduct were celebrated by the artless praises of the vulgar, as well as by the more elaborate encomiums of the

[21] Diodor. Sic. l. xi. Herodot. ubi supra.

[22] Plutarch. in Cymon. p. 187. & Æschin. advers. Ctesipont. p. 501. furnish us with examples of the jealousy of the Greeks, lest the fame due to their troops in general should be engrossed by the commanders.

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learned. Before the æra of this celebrated engagement, tragedy, the unrivalled distinction of Athenian literature, had been invented and cultivated by the successful labours of Thespis, Phrynicus, and Æschylus. The last, who is justly regarded as the great improver of the Grecian drama, displayed in the battle of Marathon the same martial ardour which still breathes in his poetry. We may reasonably imagine, that he would employ the highest flights of his fancy in extolling the glory of exploits in which he had himself borne so distinguished a part; and particularly that he would exert all the powers of his lofty genius in celebrating the hero and patriot, whose enthusiasm had animated the battle, and whose superior talents had insured the victory. The name of the conqueror at Marathon re-echoed through the spacious theatres of Athens, which, though they did not yet display that solid and durable construction still discernible in the ruins of ancient grandeur, were already built in a form sufficiently capacious to contain the largest proportion of the citizens. The magnificent encomiums bestowed on Miltiades in the presence of his assembled countrymen, by whose consenting voice they were repeated and approved, fired with emulation the young candidates for fame, while they enabled the general to obtain that mark of public confidence and esteem which was the utmost ambition of all the Grecian leaders.

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These leaders, while they remained within the territories of their respective states, were entrusted

who is appointed to command the fleet.

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(as we already had occasion to observe) with only that moderate authority which suited the equal condition of freedom. But when they were appointed to the command of the fleet in foreign parts, they obtained almost unlimited power, and might acquire immense riches. To this exalted station Miltiades was advanced by the general suffrage of his country; and having sailed with a fleet of seventy galleys, the whole naval strength of the republic, he determined to expel the Persian garrisons from the isles of the Ægæan; to reduce the smaller communities to the obedience of Athens, and to subject the more wealthy and powerful to heavy contributions.

Besieges Paros unsuccessfully.

The first operations of the Athenian armament were crowned with success: several islands were subdued, considerable sums of money were collected. But the fleet arriving before Paros, every thing proved adverse to the Athenians. Miltiades, who had received a personal injury from Tisagoras, a man of great authority in that island, yielded to the dictates of private resentment, and confounding the innocent with the guilty, demanded from the Parians the sum of an hundred talents (near twenty thousand pounds sterling). If the money were not immediately paid, he threatened to lay waste their territory, to burn their city, and to teach them by cruel experience the stern rights of a conqueror. The exorbitancy of the demand rendered compliance with it impossible; the Parians prepared for their defence, guided however by the motives of a generous despair, rather than by any well-

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grounded hope of resisting the invaders. For twenty-six days they maintained possession of the capital of the island, which the Athenians, after ravaging all the adjacent country, besieged by sea and land. The time now approached when Paros must have surrendered to a superior force; but it was the good fortune of the islanders, that an extensive grove, which happened to be set on fire in one of the Sporades, was believed by the besiegers to indicate the approach of a Persian fleet. The same opinion gained ground among the Parians, who determined, by their utmost efforts, to preserve the place, until they should be relieved by the assistance of their protectors. Miltiades had received a dangerous wound during the siege; and the weakness of his body impairing the faculties of his mind, and rendering him too sensible to the impressions of fear, he gave orders to draw off his victorious troops, and returned with the whole fleet to Athens.

Accused by his enemies.

His conduct in the present expedition ill corresponded to his former fame; and he soon experienced the instability of popular favour. The Athenian citizens, and particularly the more eminent and illustrious, had universally their rivals and enemies. The competitions for civil offices, or military command, occasioned eternal animosities among those jealous republicans. Xantippus, a person of great distinction, and father of the celebrated Pericles, who in the succeeding age obtained the first rank in the Athenian government, eagerly seized an opportunity for depressing the character of a man which had so

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long overtopped that of every competitor. Miltiades was accused of being corrupted by a Persian bribe to raise the siege of Paros: the precipitancy with which he abandoned the place, so unlike to the general firmness of his manly behaviour, gave a probable colour to the accusation; and the continual terror which, ever since the usurpation of Pisistratus, the Athenians entertained of arbitrary power, disposed them to condemn upon very slight evidence, a man whose abilities and renown seemed to endanger the safety of the commonwealth. The crime laid to his charge inferred death, a punishment which his accuser insisted ought to be immediately inflicted on him. But his judges were contented with fining him the sum of fifty talents, (near ten thousand pounds sterling,) which being unable to pay, he was thrown into prison, where he soon after died of his wounds.

His death.

Honours bestowed on his memory.

But the glory of Miltiades survived him; and the Athenians, however unjust to his person, were not unmindful of his fame. At the distance of half a century, when the battle of Marathon was painted by order of the state, they directed the figure of Miltiades to be placed in the fore-ground, animating the troops to victory: a reward which, during the virtuous simplicity of the ancient commonwealth, conferred more real honour than all that magnificent profusion of crowns and statues[24], which in the later times of the republic, were rather extorted from general fear, than bestowed by public admiration.

[24] Æschin. p. 301. & Polybius passim.

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The jealousies, resentments, dangers, and calamities, which often attend power and pre-eminence, have never yet proved sufficient to deter an ambitious mind from the pursuit of greatness. The rivals of Miltiades were animated by the glory of his elevation, not depressed by the example of his fall. His accuser Xantippus, though he had acted the principal part in removing this favourite of the people, was not deemed worthy to succeed him. Two candidates appeared for the public confidence and esteem, who alternately outstripped each other in the race of ambition, and whose characters deserve attention even in general history, as they had a powerful influence on the fortune, not of Athens only, but of all Greece.

His successors in command.

Aristides and Themistocles were nearly of the same age, and equally noble, being born in the first rank of citizens, though not of royal descent, like Solon and Pisistratus, Isagoras and Clisthenes, Xantippus and Miltiades, who had hitherto successively assumed the chief administration of the Athenian republic. Both had been named among the generals who commanded in the battle of Marathon. The disinterested behaviour of Aristides on this memorable occasion has already been mentioned. It afforded a promise of his future fame. But his dawning glories were still eclipsed by the meridian lustre of Miltiades. After the death of this great man, Aristides ought naturally to have succeeded to his influence, being pre-eminently distinguished by valour and moderation, the two great virtues of

Comparison of Aristides and Themistocles.

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a republican. Formed in such schools of moral and political knowledge as then flourished in Athens, he had learned to prefer glory to pleasure; the interest of his country to his own personal glory; and the dictates of justice and humanity, even to the interests of his country. His ambition was rather to deserve, than to acquire the admiration of his fellow-citizens; and while he enjoyed the inward satisfaction, he was little anxious about the external rewards of virtue. The character of Themistocles was of a more doubtful kind. The trophy, which Miltiades had raised at Marathon, disturbed his rest. He was inflamed with a desire to emulate the glory of this exploit; and while he enabled Athens to maintain a superiority in Greece, he was ambitious to acquire for himself a superiority in Athens. His talents were well adapted to accomplish both these purposes; eloquent, active, enterprising, he had strengthened his natural endowments by all the force of education and habit. Laws, government, revenue, and arms, every branch of political and military knowledge, were the great objects of his study. In the courts of justice he successfully displayed his abilities in defence of his private friends, or in accusing the enemies of the state. He was forward to give his opinion upon every matter of public deliberation; and his advice, founded in wisdom, and supported by eloquence, commonly prevailed in the assembly. Yet with all these great qualities, his mind was less smit with the native charms of virtue, than captivated with her

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splendid ornaments. Glory was the idol which he adored. He could injure, without remorse, the general cause of the confederacy, in order to promote the grandeur of Athens[24]; and history still leaves it as doubtful, as did his own conduct, whether, had an opportunity offered, he would not have sacrificed the happiness of his country to his private interest and ambition. CHAP. IX.

The discernment of Aristides perceived the danger of allowing a man of such equivocal merit to be entrusted with the sole government of the republic; and on this account, rather than from any motives of personal animosity, he opposed every measure that might contribute to his elevation. In this patriotic view, he frequently solicited the same honours which were ambitiously courted by Themistocles, especially when no other candidate appeared capable of balancing the credit of the latter. A rivalship thus began, and long continued between them[25]; and the whole people of Athens could alone decide the much contested pre-eminence. The interest of Themistocles so far prevailed over the authority of his opponent, that he procured his own nomination to the command of the fleet; with which he effected the conquest of the small islands in the Ægæan, and thus completed the design undertaken by Miltiades. While *he* acquired fame and fortune abroad, Aristides increased his popularity at home. The opposition to his power, arising from the splendid eloquence and popular Their rivalship.

[24] Plutarch. in Themistocle & Aristide.
[25] Plutarch. ibid. Herodot. l. viii. c. 79.

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manners of his rival, was now fortunately removed, and he became the chief leader of the people. His opinion gave law to the courts of justice, or rather such was the effect of his equity and discernment, he alone became sovereign umpire in Athens. In all important differences he was chosen arbitrator, and the ordinary judges were deprived of the dignity and advantages formerly resulting from their office. This consequence of his authority, offending the pride of the Athenian magistrates, was sufficient to excite their resentment, which, of itself, might have effected the ruin of any individual.

Aristides banished. Olymp. lxxiii. 3. A. C. 486.

But their views on this occasion were powerfully promoted by the triumphant return of Themistocles from his naval expedition. The admiral had acquired considerable riches; but wealth he despised, except as an instrument of ambition. The spoils of the conquered islanders were profusely lavished in shows, festivals, dances, and theatrical entertainments, exhibited for the public amusement. His generous manners and flowing affability were contrasted with the stern dignity of his rival; and the result of the comparison added great force to his insinuation, that, since his own necessary absence in the service of the republic, Aristides had acquired a degree of influence inconsistent with the constitution, and, by arrogating to himself an universal and unexampled jurisdiction in the state, had established a silent tyranny, without pomp or guards, over the minds of his fellow-citizens. Aristides, trusting to the innocence and integrity of his own

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heart, disdained to employ any unworthy means either for gaining the favour, or for averting the resentment, of the multitude. The contest, therefore, ended in his banishment for ten years, by a law entitled the Ostracism, (from the name of the materials[26] on which the votes were marked,) by which the majority of the Athenian assembly might expel any citizen, however inoffensive or meritorious had been his past conduct, who, by his present power and greatness, seemed capable of disturbing the equality of republican government. This singular institution, which had been established soon after the Athenians had delivered themselves from the tyranny of Hippias, the son of Pisistratus, was evidently intended to prevent any person in future from attaining the same unlawful authority. At Athens, even virtue was proscribed, when it seemed to endanger the public freedom; and only four years after the battle of Marathon, in which he had displayed equal valour and wisdom, Aristides, the justest and most respectable of the Greeks, became the victim of popular jealousy[27]; an example of cruel rigour, which will for ever brand the spirit of democratical policy.

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The banishment of Aristides exposed the Athenians, still more than formerly, to the danger which they hoped to avoid by this severe measure. The removal of such a formidable opponent enabled Themistocles to govern without controul. Army, navy, and revenue, all were

The great ascendant acquired by Themistocles;

[26] Ὀστρακον, a shell. [27] Plutarch. & Herodot. ibid.

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submitted to his direction. It happened, indeed, most fortunately for the fame of this great man, as well as for the liberty of Athens, that his active ambition was called to the glorious task of subduing the enemies of his country. The smaller islands in the Ægæan were already reduced to obedience, but the possession of them was uncertain while the fleet of Ægina covered the sea, and bid defiance to that of the Athenians. This small island, or rather this rock, inhabited time immemorial by merchants and pirates, and situate in the Saronic Gulf, which divides the territories of Attica from the northern shores of Peloponnesus, was a formidable enemy to the republic; the jealousy of commerce and naval power embittered mutual animosity; and as the inhabitants of Ægina, who were governed by a few leading men, had entered into an alliance with the Persians, there was every circumstance united which could provoke to the utmost the hatred and resentment of the Athenians.

who persuades the Athenians to augment their navy.

A motive less powerful than the excess of republican antipathy could not probably have prevailed on them to embrace the measure which they now adopted by the advice of Themistocles. There was a considerable revenue arising from the silver mines of mount Laurium, which had been hitherto employed in relieving the private wants of the citizens, or dissipated in their public amusements. This annual income Themistocles persuaded them to destine to the useful purpose of building ships of war, by which they might seize or destroy the fleet of Ægina. The pro-

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posal was approved; an hundred gallies were equipped; the naval strength of Ægina was broken, and success animated the Athenians to aspire at obtaining the unrivalled empire of the sea. Corcyra formed the only remaining obstacle to their ambition. This island, which, under the name of Phœacia, is celebrated by Homer for its amazing riches and fertility, had been still farther improved by a colony of Corinthians. It extends about fifty miles along the western shores of Epirus, and the natural abundance of its productions, the convenience of its harbours, and the adventurous spirit of its new inhabitants, gave them an undisputed advantage over their neighbours, in navigation and commerce. They became successively the rivals, the enemies, and the superiors of Corinth, their mother-country; and their successful cruisers infested the coasts, and disturbed the communication of the islands and continent of Greece. It belonged to Athens, who had so lately punished the perfidy of Ægina, to chastise the insolence of the Corcyreans. The naval depredations of these islanders made them be regarded as common enemies; and Themistocles [28], when, by seizing part of their fleet, he broke the sinews of their power, not only gratified the ambition of his republic, but performed a signal service to the whole Grecian confederacy.

They defeat the fleets of Ægina and Corcyra.

Victorious by sea and land, against Greeks and Barbarians, Athens might now seem entitled to enjoy the fruits of a glorious security. It was

Strength and spirit of Athens.

[28] Plutarch. in Themist. Thucydid. lib. i. Corn. Nepos, in Themist.

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generally believed in Greece, that the late disaster of the Persians would deter them from invading, a second time, the coasts of Europe. But Themistocles, who, in the words of a most accomplished historian[29], was no less sagacious in foreseeing the future, than skilful in managing the present, regarded the battle of Marathon, not as the end of the war, but as the prelude to new and more glorious combats. He continually exhorted his fellow-citizens to keep themselves in readiness for action; above all, to increase, with unremitting assiduity, the strength of their fleet: and, in consequence of this judicious advice, the Athenians were enabled to oppose the immense armaments of Xerxes, of which the most formidable tidings soon arrived from every quarter, with two hundred gallies of a superior size and construction to any hitherto known in Greece.[30]

State of the other republics immediately preceding the invasion of Xerxes.

This fleet proved the safety of Greece, and prevented a country from which the knowledge of laws, learning, and civility was destined to flow over Europe, from becoming a province of the Persian empire, and being confounded with the mass of barbarous nations. While the Athenians were led, by the circumstances which we have endeavoured to explain, to prepare this useful engine of defence, the other Grecian states afford, in their unimportant transactions, few materials for history.[31] The Spartans had long

[29] Thucydides, ibid.
[30] Plato, l. iii. de Leg.
[31] Herodot. l. vii. Diodor. l. xi.

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preserved an unrivalled ascendant in Peloponnesus; and their pre-eminence was still farther confirmed by the unequal and unfortunate opposition of the Argives. Many bloody and desperate engagements had been fought between these warlike and high-spirited rivals: but, before the Persian invasion, the strength of Argos was much exhausted by repeated defeats, particularly by the destructive battle of Thyræa, in which she lost six thousand of her bravest citizens. The Spartans also carried on occasional hostilities against the Corinthians and Achæans, the inhabitants of Elis and Arcadia; and these several republics frequently decided their pretensions in the field; but neither their contests with each other, nor their wars with Sparta, were attended with any considerable or permanent effects. Their perpetual hostilities with foreign states ought to have given internal quiet to the Spartans; yet the jealousy of power, or the opposition of character, occasioned incurable dissension between the two first magistrates of the republic, Cleomenes and Demaratus. By the intrigues of the former, his rival was unjustly deposed from the royal dignity. Leotychides, his kinsman and successor in the throne, insulted his misfortunes; and Demaratus, unable to endure contempt in a country where he had enjoyed a crown, sought for that protection which was denied him in Greece, from the power and resentment of Persia. Cleomenes soon afterwards died by his own hand, after vainly struggling against the stings of remorse, which persecuted his ungenerous

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treatment of a worthy colleague.[32] He was succeeded by the heroic Leonidas, whose death (as shall be related), at Thermopylæ, was still more illustrious and happy than that of Cleomenes was wretched and infamous. During the domestic disturbances of Sparta, the other states of Peloponnesus enjoyed a relaxation from the toils of war. The Arcadians and Argives tended their flocks, and cultivated their soil. Elis was contented with the superintendence of the Olympic games; the Corinthians increased and abused the wealth which they had already acquired by their fortunate situation between two seas, and by long continuing the centre of the internal commerce of Greece. Of the republics beyond the isthmus, the Phocians wished to enjoy, in tranquillity, the splendour and riches which their whole territory derived from the celebrated temple of Delphi. They were frequently disturbed, however, by invasions from Thessaly; the inhabitants of which, though numerous and warlike, yet being situate at the extremity of Greece, still continued, like the Etolians, barbarous and uncultivated.[33] The Thebans maintained and extended their usurpations over the smaller cities of Bœotia, and rejoiced that the ambition of the Athenians, directed to the command of the sea, and the conquest of distant islands, prevented that aspiring people from giving the same minute attention as usual to the affairs of the continent. The other republics were inconsiderable, and commonly followed the for-

Of the colonies.

[32] Herodot. v. 75.

[33] Thucydid. l. i.

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tunes of their more powerful neighbours. The Asiatic colonies were reduced under the Persian yoke; the Greek establishments in Thrace and Macedon paid tribute to Xerxes; but the African Greeks bravely maintained their independence; and the flourishing settlements in Italy and Sicily were now acting a part which will be explained hereafter, and which rivalled, perhaps surpassed, the glory of Athens and Sparta in the Persian war. [34]

The preparations of Xerxes for invading Greece. Olymp. lxxiv. 4. A. C. 481.

Meanwhile the reduction of revolted provinces had given employment and lustre to the Persian arms. Nine years after the battle of Marathon, and in the fourth year of his reign, Xerxes found himself uncontrouled master of the East, and in possession of such a fleet and army as flattered him with the hopes of universal empire. The three last years of Darius were spent in preparing for the Grecian expedition. Xerxes, who succeeded to his sceptre and to his revenge, dedicated four years more to the same hostile purpose. Amidst his various wars and pleasures, he took care that the artisans of Egypt and Phœnicia, as well as of all the maritime provinces of Lower Asia, should labour with unremitting diligence in fitting out an armament adequate to the extent of his ambition. Twelve hundred ships of war, and three thousand ships of burden, were at length ready to receive his commands. The former were of a larger size and firmer con-

[34] Diodor. l. xi. c. xvi. & xvii.

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struction than any hitherto seen in the ancient world: they carried on board at a medium two hundred seamen, and thirty Persians who served as marines. The ships of burthen contained in general eighty men, fewer being found incapable of rowing them. The whole amounted to four thousand two hundred ships, and above five hundred thousand men, who were ordered to rendezvous in the most secure roads and harbours of Ionia. We are not exactly informed of the number of the land forces, which were assembled at Susa. It is certain, however, that they were extremely numerous, and it is probable that they would continually increase on the march from Susa to Sardes, by the confluence of many tributary nations to the imperial standard of Xerxes.

Their magnitude.

When the army had attained its perfect complement, we are told that it consisted of seventeen hundred thousand infantry, and four hundred thousand cavalry; which, joined to the fleet above mentioned, made the whole forces amount to nearly two millions of fighting men. An immense crowd of women and eunuchs followed the camp of an effeminate people. These instruments of pleasure and luxury, together with the slaves necessary in transporting the baggage and provisions, equalled, perhaps exceeded[35], the number of the soldiers; so that, according to the

[35] A military friend has favoured me with the actual return of an army serving under British officers in the East:

Officers and troops, - -	6,727
Servants and followers, - -	19,779

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universal testimony of ancient historians, the army of Xerxes should appear the greatest that was ever collected. [36] CHAP. IX.

But many circumstances serve to prove that its strength by no means corresponded to its magnitude. The various nations which composed it, were not divided into regular bodies, properly disciplined and officered. Their muster-roll was taken in a manner that is remarkable for its simplicity. Ten thousand men were separated from the rest, formed into a compact body, and surrounded by a pallisade. The whole army passed successively into this inclosure, and were thus numbered like cattle, without the formality of placing them in ranks, or of calling their names.

Xerxes passes the Hellespont. Olymp. lxxv. 1. A. C. 480.

Xerxes, having wintered at Sardes, sent ambassadors early in the spring to demand earth and water, as a mark of submission, from the several Grecian republics. With regard to Athens and Sparta, he thought it unnecessary to observe this ceremony, as they had treated with the most inhuman cruelty, and in direct contradiction to their own laws of war, the messengers intrusted with a similar commission by his father

[36] Herodot. l. vii. c. cxxxix. et seq. enters into a circumstantial detail of the Persian forces. His account is confirmed, with less difference than usual in such cases, by Lysias, Orat. Funeb. Isocrat. Panegyr. Diodor. l. xi. p. 244. Herodotus repeatedly expresses his astonishment at the immensity of the Barbarian hosts. He appears fully sensible of the difficulties with which they had to struggle, in order to procure provisions. His account of the Grecian fleet and army is acknowledged to be faithful and exact in the highest degree; circumstances which strongly confirm the credibility of his evidence.

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Darius. The slow march of his immense army, and, still more, its tedious transportation across the seas which separate Europe from Asia, ill suited the rapid violence of his revenge. Xerxes therefore ordered a bridge of boats to be raised on the Hellespont, which, in the narrowest part, is only seven stadia, or seven-eighths of a mile in breadth. Here the bridge was formed with great labour; but whether owing to the awkwardness of its construction, or to the violence of a succeeding tempest, it was no sooner built than destroyed. The Great King ordered the directors of the work to be beheaded; and, proud of his tyrannic power over feeble man, displayed an impotent rage against the elements. In all the madness of despotism he commanded the Hellespont to be punished with three hundred stripes, and a pair of fetters to be dropped into the sea, adding these frantic and ridiculous expressions: "It is thus, thou salt and bitter water, that thy master punishes thy unprovoked injury, and he is determined to pass thy treacherous streams notwithstanding all the insolence of thy malice."[37] After this absurd ceremony, a new bridge was made of a double range of vessels, fixed by strong anchors on both sides, and joined together by cables of hemp and reed, fastened to immense beams driven into the opposite shores. The decks of the vessels, which exceeded six hundred in number, were strewed with trunks of trees and earth, and their surface was still far-

[37] Herodot. vii. 55.

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ther smoothed by a covering of planks. The sides were then railed with wicker-work, to prevent the fear and impatience of the horses; and upon this singular edifice the main strength of the army passed in seven days and nights, from the Asiatic city of Abydos to that of Sestos in Europe.[38]

Cuts a canal through the isthmus of Sana.

But before this general transportation, a considerable division of the forces had been already sent to the coast of Macedonia in order to dig across the isthmus which joins to that coast the high promontory of Athos. The disaster which befel the fleet commanded by Mardonius, in doubling the cape of this celebrated peninsula, was still present to the mind of Xerxes. The neck of land, only a mile and a half in breadth, was adorned by the Grecian city of Sana; and the promontory being rich and fertile, was well inhabited by both Greeks and Barbarians. The cutting of this narrow isthmus, by a canal of sufficient width to allow two galleys to sail abreast, was a matter not beyond the power of a potentate who commanded the labour of so many myriads[39];

[38] Herodot. l. vii. c. lvi.

[39] Herodot. l. vii. c. xxi. et seq. & Diodor. l. xi. c. ii. It is difficult to say, whether we ought most to condemn the swelling exaggeration with which Lysias, Isocrates, and other writers, speak of these operations of Xerxes, which they call "navigating the land, and walking the sea," or the impudent incredulity of Juvenal:

——— creditur olim
Velificatus Athos, et quidquid Græcia mendax
Audet in historia, constratum classibus iisdem
Suppositumque rotis solidum mare.———

Nothing is better fitted to perpetuate error than the smart sentence of a satirist. A line of the same Juvenal has branded Cicero as a bad

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but it is observed by Herodotus, to have been a work of more ostentation than utility, as the vessels might, according to the custom of the age, have been conveyed over land with greater expedition, and with less trouble and expence. The eastern workmen were in general so extremely unacquainted with operations of this kind, that they made the opening at the surface no larger than that necessary at the bottom of the channel. In order to excite their diligence by national emulation, a particular portion of the ground was assigned to each distinction of people engaged in this undertaking. The Phœnicians alone, by giving a proper width at the top, avoided the inconvenience of submitting to a double labour. In performing this, and every other task, the soldiers of Xerxes were kept to their work by stripes and blows; a circumstance which gives us as mean an opinion of their spirit and activity, as all that has been already related gives us of their skill and discipline.

Xerxes reviews his forces near Doriscus.

The Persian forces were now safely conducted into Europe; and the chief obstacle to the easy navigation of their fleet along the coasts of Thrace, Macedon, and Thessaly, to the centre of

poet, though that universal literary genius left admirable verses behind him, which have been transmitted to modern times. The digging of the canal of Athos is supported by the uniform testimony of all antiquity, and might be credited on the single evidence of Thucydides (l. iv. c. cix.), the most faithful, accurate, and impartial of all historians, ancient or modern; and who himself lived long in the neighbourhood of Athos, where he had an estate, and was director of the Athenian mines in Thrace; as will appear hereafter.

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the Grecian states, was removed by the dividing of mount Athos. Through the fertile plains of Lesser Asia, the whole army had kept in a body; but the difficulty of supplies obliged them to separate into three divisions in their march through the less cultivated countries of Europe. Before this separation took place, the whole fleet and army were reviewed by Xerxes, near Doriscus, a city of Thrace, at the mouth of the river Hebrus. Such an immense collection of men assembled in arms, and attended with every circumstance of martial magnificence, gave an opportunity for seeing, or at least for supposing, many affecting scenes. The ambition of the Great King had torn him from his palace of Susa, but it could not tear him from the objects of his affection, and the ministers of his pleasure. He was followed by his women, and by his flatterers[40]; and all the effeminate pride of a court was blended with the pomp of war. While the great body of the army lay every night in the open air, Xerxes and his attendants were provided with magnificent tents. The splendour of his chariots, the mettle of his horses, which far excelled the swiftest racers in Thessaly, the unexampled number of his troops, and, above all, the bravery of the immortal band, a body of ten thousand Persian cavalry, so named because their number was constantly maintained from the flower of the whole army, seemed sufficient to the admiring crowd, to raise the glory of their sovereign above

His splendour,

[40] Plato de Legibus, l. iii. p. 536

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the condition of humanity; especially since, among so many thousands of men as passed in review, none could be compared to Xerxes in strength, in beauty, or in stature.[41]

and misery.

But amidst this splendour of external greatness, Xerxes felt himself unhappy. Having ascended an eminence to view his camp and fleet, his pride was humbled with the reflection, that no one of all the innumerable host could be expected to survive an hundred years. The haughty monarch of Asia was melted into tears. The conversation of his kinsman and counsellor, Artabanus, was ill calculated to console his melancholy. That respectable old man, whose wisdom had often moderated the youthful impetuosity of Xerxes, and who had been as assiduous to prevent, as Mardonius had been to promote, the Grecian war, took notice that the misery of human life was an object far more lamentable than its shortness. "In the narrow space allotted them, has not every one of these in our presence, and indeed the whole human race, often wished rather to die than to live? The tumult of passions disturbs the best of our days; diseases and weakness accompany old age; and death, so vainly dreaded, is the sure and hospitable refuge of wretched mortals."

He converses with Demaratus, the banished King of Sparta.

Xerxes was not of a disposition steadily to contemplate the dictates of experience and the maxims of philosophy. He endeavoured to divert those gloomy reflections which he could not

[41] Herodot. l. vii. c. clxxxiv.

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remove, by amusing his fancy with horse-races, mock battles, and other favourite entertainments. In the intervals of these diversions, he sometimes conversed with Demaratus, the banished king of Sparta, who, as we have already mentioned, had sought refuge in the Persian court, from the persecution of his countrymen. A memorable interview between them is related by Herodotus. The Persian, displaying ostentatiously the magnitude of his power, asked the royal fugitive, Whether he suspected the Greeks would yet venture to take the field, in order to oppose the progress of his arms? Demaratus replied, that if he might speak without giving offence, he was of opinion that the Persians would meet with a very vigorous resistance. "Greece had been trained in the severe, but useful school of necessity; poverty was her nurse and her mother; she had acquired patience and valour, by the early application of discipline; and she was habituated to the practice of virtue by the watchful attention of the law. All the Greeks were warlike, but the Spartans were peculiarly brave. It was unnecessary to ask their number; for if they exceeded not a thousand men, they would defend their country and their freedom against the assembled myriads of Asia." [42]

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Xerxes was rather amused than instructed by this discourse. His hopes of success seemed built on too solid principles to be shaken by the opinion of a prejudiced Greek. Every day

Receives the submission of many Grecian communities.

[42] Herodot. l. vii. c. cii. et seq.

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messengers arrived with the submission of new nations. The inhabitants of the rocky country of Doris, many tribes of Thessaly, the mountaineers of Pindus, Ossa, Pelion, and Olympus, which, like a lofty rampart, surround that country, offered the usual present of earth and water, as the symbol of surrendering their territories to a power which it seemed vain to resist. These districts formed only the northern frontier of Greece. But what gave peculiar pleasure to Xerxes, the Thebans, who inhabited the central parts, and all the cities of Bœotia, except Thespiæ and Platæa, privately sent ambassadors to testify their good-will to his cause, and to request the honour of his friendship.

Measures of the Athenians and their confederates.

Meanwhile those Grecians, who, unmoved by the terrors of invasion, obeyed the voice of liberty and their country, had sent deputies to the isthmus of Corinth, to deliberate about the common interest. They consisted of representatives from the several states of Peloponnesus, and from the most considerable republics beyond that peninsula. By common consent, they suspended their domestic animosities, recalled their fugitives, consulted their oracles, and dispatched ambassadors, in the name of united Greece, to demand assistance from the islands of Crete, Cyprus, and Corcyra, as well as from the Grecian colonies on the coasts of Italy and Sicily. All their measures were carried on with great appearance of unanimity and concord. Even the Thebans, careful to conceal their treachery, had sent representatives to the common council. The general danger

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seemed to unite and harmonize the most discordant members; and although unceasing dissensions between rival states, frequently weakened the authority of the Amphictyonic confederacy, it appeared on the present, as on many future occasions, that the Greeks acknowledged the obligation of a tacit alliance to defend each other against domestic tyrants and foreign barbarians.

The Thessalians crave their assistance.

Before they had an opportunity of learning the will of the gods, or of discovering the intentions of their distant allies, ambassadors arrived from those communities of Thessaly which still adhered to the interest of Greece, praying a speedy and effectual assistance towards guarding the narrow passes which lead into their country.

The valley of Tempé

There is a valley near the coast of the Ægæan, between the lofty mountains of Ossa and Olympus, which afforded the most convenient passage from Macedon into Thessaly. This singular spot, commonly called the valley of Tempé, is about five miles in length, and, where narrowest, scarcely an hundred paces in breadth; but is adorned by the hand of nature with every object that can gratify the senses or delight the fancy. The gently flowing Peneus[43] intersects the middle of the plain. Its waters are increased by per-

[43] I know not why Ovid says,

Peneus ab imo
Effusus Pindo *spumosis* volvitur *undis*.

Metam. l. i. ver. 573.

Ælian (from whom the description in the text is taken) says, that the Peneus flows,

Δικην ελαιυ, smooth as oil.

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ennial cascades from the green mountains, and thus rendered of sufficient depths for vessels of considerable burden. The rocks are every where planted with vines and olives, and the banks of the river, and even the river itself, are overshadowed with lofty forest trees, which defend those who sail upon it from the sun's meridian ardour. The innumerable grottos and arbours carelessly scattered over this delightful scene, and watered by fountains of peculiar freshness and salubrity, invite the weary traveller to repose; while the musical warbling of birds conspires with the sweet fragrance of flowers to soothe his senses, and to heighten the pleasure which the eye and fancy derive from viewing the charming variety of this enchanting landscape; from examining the happy intermixture of hill and dale, wood and water; and from contemplating the diversified beauty and majestic grandeur of Nature, under her most blooming and beneficent aspects.

is occupied by the Greeks;

This delicious valley, which an ancient writer, by a bold figure of speech, calls "a festival for the eyes," and which the bounty of the gods had formed for happy scenes of love, innocence, and tranquillity, the destructive ambition of man was ready to convert into a field of bloodshed and horror. It was natural for the Thessalians to expect that the troops of Xerxes would pass by this inlet into their territories; and hither their ambassadors entreated the allied Greeks to send an army. The proposal seemed just and useful; ships were prepared at the isthmus; and a body of

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ten thousand men were embarked under the command of Themistocles, with orders to sail through the narrow Euripus, to land in the harbours of Tempé, and remain there in order to guard that important pass. CHAP. IX.

They had not continued in those parts many days, when a messenger arrived from Alexander, son of Amyntas, tributary prince of Macedonia, advising them to depart from that post, unless they meant to be trodden under foot by the Persian cavalry. It is not probable, however, that this menace could have changed their resolution. But they had already learned that there was another passage into Thessaly, through the territoy of the Perræbians, near the city Gonnus in Upper Macedonia. Their army was insufficient to guard both; and the defending of one only, could not be of essential advantage to themselves, to the Thessalians, or to the common cause. but soon abandoned.

Meantime, the dangers which thickened over their respective republics, rendered it necessary to return southward. Their distant colonies, particularly those of Sicily, which were the most numerous and powerful, could not afford them any assistance, being themselves threatened with a formidable invasion from the Carthaginians, the cause and consequences of which we shall have occasion fully to explain. The oracles were doubtful, or terrifying. To the Spartans they announced, as the only means of safety, the voluntary death of a king of the race of Hercules. The Athenians were commanded to seek refuge within their wooden walls. The The dangers which threaten Greece become more imminent and alarming.

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responses given to the other states are not particularly recorded; but it appears in general, that all were dark, ambiguous, or frightful. The Grecian army returned therefore to their ships, repassed the Euripus, and arrived in safety at Corinth; while the Thessalians, thus abandoned by their allies, reluctantly submitted to the common enemy.

The Grecian fleet sails to Artemisium.

The terror inspired by the critical situation of affairs, rendered the presence of the leaders necessary in their respective communities. Themistocles found the Athenians divided about the meaning of the oracle, the greater part asserting, that by wooden walls was understood the inclosure of the citadel, which had been formerly surrounded by a pallisade. Others gave the words a different construction, and each according to his fears or his interest; but Themistocles asserted that all of them had mistaken the advice of the god, who desired them to trust for safety to their fleet. This opinion, supported by all the force of his eloquence, and the weight of his authority, at length prevailed in the assembly, although Epicides, a demagogue of great influence among the lower ranks of people, opposed it with the utmost vehemence; and seizing this opportunity to vilify the character of Themistocles, insisted that he himself should be appointed general in his room. But the prudent Athenian knew the weakness of his adversary; his great passion was avarice; and a seasonable bribe immediately silenced his clamorous opposition. The Athenian galleys were fitted out

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with all convenient speed, and being joined with those of Eubœa, Ægina, Corinth, and the maritime allies of Peloponnesus, amounted to a fleet of three hundred sail. They proceeded to the narrow sea which divides the northern shore of Eubœa from the coast of Thessaly, rendezvoused at the promontory of Artemisium, and patiently expected the arrival of the Barbarians.

The Greeks assemble an army.

Besides the force necessary for manning this fleet, the confederates could raise an army of about sixty thousand freemen, together with a still greater proportion of armed slaves. As the passes leading from Thessaly to the territories of Phocis and Locris were still narrower and more difficult of access than those from Macedon into Thessaly, it seems extraordinary that they did not immediately direct their whole military strength towards that quarter: but this neglect may be explained by their superstitious veneration for oracles, the necessity of celebrating their accustomed festivals, and the dangerous delays and inactivity inherent in the nature of a republican confederacy. As they were acquainted with only one pass, by which the Persians could arrive from Thessaly, they thought that a body of eight thousand pike-men might be equally capable with a larger proportion of troops, of defending it against every invader. This narrow defile was called the Straits of Thermopylæ, in allusion to the warm springs in that neighbourhood, and was deemed the gate or entrance into Greece. It was bounded on the west by high and inaccessible precipices which join the lofty ridge of mount

Guard the Straits of Thermopylæ.

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Oeta; and on the east terminated by an impracticable morass, bordered by the sea. Near the plain of the Thessalian city of Trachis, the passage was fifty feet broad; but at Alpené, there was not room for one chariot to pass another. Even these passes were defended by walls, formerly built by the Phocians to protect them against the incursions of their enemies in Thessaly, and strengthened, on this occasion, with as much care as time would allow. The troops sent to Thermopylæ, which was only fifteen miles distant from the station of the Grecian fleet at Artemisium, consisted chiefly of Peloponnesians, commanded by Leonidas the Spartan king, who was prepared, in obedience to the oracle, to devote his life for the safety of his country.

The Persian fleet arrive near Cape Sepias.

Before the Grecian confederates adopted these vigorous measures for their own defence, the Persian army had marched, in three divisions, from Thracian Doriscus. They were accompanied by the fleet, which, coasting about two hundred miles along the shores of Thrace, Macedon, and Thessaly, at length reached Cape Sepias, which is twenty miles north of Artemisium. As they advanced southward, they laid under contribution Abdera[44], Thasus, and Eion, the principal Gre-

[44] The places on the road prepared not only vast magazines of corn and other provisions for the troops, but sumptuous entertainments for Xerxes and his attendants. A saying of Megacreon of Abdera expressed the devouring rapacity of the invaders: "The Abderites ought to thank the gods, that Xerxes feasted but once a day; it would ruin Abdera to furnish him with both a dinner and a supper."

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cian colonies in Thrace, as well as the cities of Torona, Olynthus, Potidæa, and other places of smaller note on the coast of Macedonia. The whole fleet anchored, after performing the most tedious and dangerous part of the voyage, near the entrance of the rivers Axius and Lydius, which flow into the Thermaic gulph; and, after quitting these harbours, spent eleven days in sailing eighty miles, along a smooth unbroken coast, from the northern extremity of this gulph to the general rendezvous near Cape Sepias. CHAP. IX.

Their army marches to the plains of Trachis.

The fleet was commanded by Achæmines and Ariabignes, sons of Darius. Xerxes in person headed his army, which made a considerable halt at the Macedonian towns of Therma and Pella, and encamped in the Thracian plains on each side of the above-mentioned rivers Axius and Lydius. From hence they proceeded in three bodies; the division nearest the shore was commanded by Mardonius and Masistes. Sergis, an experienced general, conducted the march through the higher parts of the country; and the great king, accompanied by Smerdones and Megabyzus, who occasionally relieved him from the trouble of command, chose the middle passage as the safest, the most convenient, and the most entertaining; for hitherto the Persian expedition was rather a journey of pleasure, than an undertaking of fatigue or danger. Xerxes examined at leisure such objects of nature or art as appeared most interesting and curious. His fancy was amused, as he passed the various scenes of superstition, with the legendary tales

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carefully related by his conductors. He viewed with pleasure the wide plains of Thessaly, which bore indubitable marks of being once an extensive lake; and contemplated with wonder the lofty mountains which separated that country from the rest of Greece, and which evidently appear to be rent asunder, and to have received their present form from the terrible operations of volcanoes and earthquakes. After fully satisfying his curiosity, he joined, with the division more immediately under his command, the remainder of the army, assembled and encamped on the wide plains of Trachis, about forty miles in circumference, stretching along the shore of Thessaly, opposite to the station of the Persian fleet, and adjacent to the Straits of Thermopylæ.[45]

Circumstances that rendered the Spartans respectable to Xerxes.

For more than twelve months, Xerxes had never seen the face of an enemy. He had traversed, without resistance, the wide regions of Asia, and the countries which in ancient times were deemed most warlike in Europe. All the territories beyond Trachis acknowledged his power; and the districts of Greece, which still presented a scene of action to his invincible arms, were less extensive than the meanest of his provinces. Yet it is probable that he heard, not without emotion, that an army of Greeks, headed by the Spartan king, had taken post at Thermopylæ, in order to dispute his passage. What he had been told by Demaratus concerning the cha-

[45] Herodot. Diodor. Plutarch. ibid.

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racter and principles of that heroic people, he might now, when the danger drew near, be the more inclined to believe, from the suggestions of his own memory and experience. In the warmth of generous indignation, the Spartans, as we have already observed, had put to death the Persian heralds sent to demand their submission; but, upon cool reflection, they were prompted, chiefly indeed by superstitious motives, to make atonement for a violation of the sacred law of nations. When proclamation was made in the assembly, "Who would die for Sparta?" two citizens, of great rank and eminence, offered themselves as willing sacrifices for the good of the community. Sperthies and Bulis (for these were their names) set out for Susa on this singular errand. As they passed through Lesser Asia, they were entertained by Hydarnes, the governor of that province, who actually accompanied Xerxes, as commander of the Immortal Band, to which dignity he had been raised through superior merit. Hydarnes, among other discourse with the Spartans, testified his surprise, that their republic should be so averse to the friendship of the king his master, who, he observed, as they might learn by his own example, well understood the value of brave men. That, if they complied with the desires of Xerxes, he would appoint them governors over the other cities of Greece. The Spartans coolly replied, "That he talked of a matter of which he was not a competent judge. With the condition and rewards of servitude, he was indeed sufficiently acquainted; but as to the enjoyments

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of liberty, he had never proved how sweet they were; for, if he had once made that experiment, he would advise them to defend their freedom not only with lances, but with hatchets." [46]

The same magnanimity distinguished their behaviour at Susa. The guards told them, that, when admitted into the presence of Xerxes, they must observe the usual ceremony of prostrating themselves on the ground. But the Spartans declared, "That no degree of violence could make them submit to such mean adulation: that they were not accustomed to adore a man, and came not thither for such an impious purpose." They approached Xerxes, therefore, in an erect posture, and told him with firmness, that they came to submit to any punishment which he might think proper to inflict on them, as an atonement for the death of his heralds. Xerxes, admiring their virtue, replied, "That he certainly should not repeat the error of the Greeks, nor, by sacrificing individuals, deliver the state from the guilt of murder and impiety." The Spartans having received this answer, returned home, persuaded that they had done their duty in offering private satisfaction; which, though not accepted, ought sufficiently to atone for the public crime. [47]

He sends messengers to treat with them.

The example of these distinguished patriots probably gave Xerxes a very favourable idea of the general character of their community. As he had not any particular quarrel with the

[46] Herodot. l. vii. c. cxxxv. [47] Idem, l. vii. c. cxxxiv. et seq.

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Spartans, whose opposition, though it could not prevent, would certainly retard, his intended punishment of Athens, he sent messengers to desire them to lay down their arms; to which they replied, "Come and take them." The messengers then offered them lands, on condition they became allies to the Great King; but they answered, "That it was the custom of their republic to conquer lands by valour, not to acquire them by treachery." Except in making these smart replies, they took not the smallest notice of the Persians; but continued to employ themselves as before their arrival, contending in the gymnastic exercises, entertaining themselves with music and conversation, or adjusting their long hair to appear more terrible to their enemies. The messengers of Xerxes, equally astonished at what they saw and heard, returned to the Persian camp, and described the unexpected issue of their commission, as well as the extraordinary behaviour of the Spartans; of which Xerxes desired an explanation from their countryman Demaratus.[48] The latter declared in general, that their whole carriage and demeanour announced a determined resolution to fight to the last extremity: but he found it difficult to make the Persian conceive the motives of men, who sought, at the certain price of their own lives, to purchase immortal renown for their country.—That a few individuals should be animated, on some extraordinary occasions, with this patriotic magnanimity, may easily be understood. Of this, history in all

Magnanimity of the Spartans.

[48] Herodot. l. vii. c. ccix. et seq.

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ages furnishes illustrious examples; but that a whole nation should be habitually impressed with the same generosity of character, cannot readily be believed, without reflecting on the institutions and manners of the Spartans. The laws of that celebrated people prohibiting, as it has been already observed[49], the introduction of wealth and luxury, and rigidly confining each individual to the rank in which he was born, had extinguished the great motives of private ambition, and left scarcely any other scope to the active principles of men, but the glory of promoting the interests of their republic. Their extraordinary military success, the natural fruit of their temperance and activity, had given them a permanent sense of their superiority in war, which it became their chief point of honour to maintain and to confirm; and, as the law which commanded them to die rather than break their ranks, or abandon their posts in battle, was, like all the ordinances of Lycurgus, conceived to be of divine authority, the influence of superstition happily conspired with the ardour of patriotism and the enthusiasm of valour, in preparing them to meet certain death in the service of the public.

Xerxes waits four days, in hopes of changing their resolution.

Xerxes could not be made to enter into these motives, or to believe, as Herodotus observes with inimitable simplicity, "that the Grecians were come to Thermopylæ only as men desirous to die, and to destroy as many of their enemies as they could," though nothing was more true.

[49] See above, c. iii. p. 133.

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He therefore waited four days, continually expecting that they would either retreat into their own country, or surrender their arms, agreeably to his message. But, as they still continued to guard the passage, he ascribed this conduct to obstinacy or folly; and, on the fifth day, determined to chastise their insolent opposition. CHAP. IX.

Gives orders to attack them and their confederates.

The Medes and Cissians, who, next to the Sacæ and Persians, formed the bravest part of his army, were commanded to attack these obstinate Greeks, and to bring them alive into the king's presence. The Barbarians marched with confidence to the engagement, but were repulsed with great slaughter. The places of those who fell were incessantly supplied with fresh troops, but they could not make the smallest impression on the firm battalions of the Greeks; and the great loss which they sustained in the attempt, convinced all, and particularly the king himself, that he had indeed many men, but few soldiers. The Sacæ, armed with their hatchets, next marched to the attack, but without better success; and last of all, the chosen band of Persians, headed by Hydarnes, deigned to display their valour in what appeared to them a very unequal contest. But they soon changed their opinion when they came to close with the enemy; for, says Herodotus, their numbers were useless, as they fought in a narrow pass, and their short-pointed weapons were ill calculated to contend with the length of the Grecian spear. The Greeks had the advantage still more in the superiority of their discipline, than in the excellence

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of their armour. Tired with destroying, they retreated in close order, and when pursued unguardedly by the Barbarians, they faced about on a sudden, and killed an incredible number of the Persians, with scarcely any loss to themselves.

His troops are repelled.

Xerxes, who was seated on an eminence to behold the battle, frequently started in wild emotion from his throne; and, fearing lest he should be deprived of the flower of his army, he ordered them to be drawn off from the attack. But as the Grecian numbers were so extremely inconsiderable, and as it seemed probable that the greatest part of them must have suffered much injury in these repeated assaults, he determined next day to renew the engagement. Next day he fought without better success than before; and after vainly endeavouring to force the pass, both in separate bodies, and with the collected vigour of their troops, the Persians were compelled to abandon the enterprise, and disgracefully to retire to their camp.

The Greeks betrayed by Epialtes:

It was a spectacle which the world had never seen before, and which it was never again to behold, the persevering intrepidity of eight thousand men resisting the impetuous fury of an army composed of millions. The pertinacious valour of Leonidas, and of his little troop, opposed, and might long have retarded, the progress of the Barbarians. But it was the fate of Greece, always to be conquered rather by the treachery of false friends, than by the force of open enemies. When Xerxes knew not what measures to pursue in order to effect his purpose, and felt the incon-

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venience of remaining long in the same quarters with such an immense number of men, a perfidious Greek, induced by the hopes of reward, offered to remove his difficulties.[50] The name of the traitor was Epialtes, and he was a native of the obscure district of Mœlis, which separates the frontiers of Thessaly and Phocis. His experience of the country made him acquainted with a passage through the mountains of Oeta, several miles to the west of that guarded by Leonidas. Over this unfrequented path he undertook to conduct a body of twenty thousand Persians, who might assault the enemy in rear, while the main body attacked them in front. By this means whatever prodigies of valour the Greeks might perform, they must be finally compelled to surrender, as they would be inclosed on all sides among barren rocks and inhospitable deserts.

who conducts a Persian detachment over the mountains.

The plan, so judiciously concerted, was carried into immediate execution. On the evening of the seventh day after Xerxes arrived at the Straits, twenty thousand chosen men left the Persian camp, commanded by Hydarnes, and conducted by Epialtes. All night they marched through the thick forests of oak which abound in those parts, and by day-break they advanced near to the top of the hill. But how much were they surprised to see the first rays of the morning reflected by the glittering surfaces of Grecian spears and helmets! Hydarnes was afraid that these out-guards, which seemed at no great

[50] Herodot. l. vii. c. ccxii. et seq.

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distance, also might be composed of Lacedæmonians; but a nearer approach shewed that they consisted of a thousand Phocians, whom the foresight of Leonidas had sent to defend this important but unknown pass, which chance or treachery might discover to the Persians. The thick shade of the trees long concealed the enemy from the Greeks: at length the rustling of the leaves, and the tumult occasioned by the motion of twenty thousand men, discovered the imminence of danger: the Phocians with great intrepidity flew to their arms, and prepared, if they could not conquer, at least to die gallantly. The compact firmness of their ranks, which might have resisted the regular onset of the enemy, exposed them to suffer much from the immense shower of darts which the Persians poured upon them. To avoid this danger, they too rashly abandoned the pass which they had been sent to guard, and retired to the highest part of the mountain, not doubting that the enemy, whose strength so much exceeded their own, would follow them thither. But in this they were disappointed; for the Persians, prudently omitting the pursuit of this inconsiderable party, whom to destroy they considered as a matter of little moment, immediately seized the passage, and marched down the mountain with the utmost expedition, in order to accomplish the design suggested by Epialtes.

Alarm in the Grecian camp.

Meanwhile, obscure intimations from the gods had darkly announced some dreadful calamity impending on the Greeks at Thermopylæ. The

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appearance of the entrails, which were carefully inspected by the augur Magistias, threatened the Spartans with death; but when, or by what means, it did not clearly appear, until a Grecian deserter, a native of the city of Cymé in Ionia, named Tyrastiades, arrived with the information of the intended march of the Persians across the mountain. Animated by the love of his country, this generous fugitive had no sooner discovered the treacherous design of Epialtes, than he determined, at the risk of his life, and still more at the risk of being subjected to the most excruciating tortures, to communicate his discovery to the Spartan King.[51] Zeal for the safety of Greece gave swiftness to his steps, and he appeared in the Grecian camp a few hours after the Persians, conducted by Epialtes, had left the plains of Trachis. Leonidas immediately called a council of war, to deliberate upon the measures necessary to be taken in consequence of this information, equally important and alarming. All the confederates of Peloponnesus, except the Spartans, declared their opinion that it was necessary to abandon a post, which, after the double attack announced to them should take place, it would be impossible with any hopes of success to maintain. As their exertions could not be of any avail to the public cause, it was prudent to consult their private safety; and while time was yet allowed them, to retire to the isthmus of Corinth, where joining the rest of the auxiliaries, they might be ready to defend the Grecian peninsula against the

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[51] Herodot. l. vii. c. ccxix. et seq.

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fury of the Barbarians. It belonged to Leonidas to explain the sentiments of the Spartans. The other inhabitants of Peloponnesus, he observed, might follow the dictates of expediency, and return to the isthmus, in order to defend their respective territories; but glory was the only voice which the Spartans had learned to obey. Placed in the first rank by the general consent of their country, they would rather die than abandon the post of honour; and they were determined, therefore, at the price of their lives, to purchase immortal renown, to confirm the pre-eminence of Sparta, and to give an example of patriotism, worthy of being admired, if it should not be imitated, by posterity.

Magnanimity of Leonidas.

Seven hundred Thespians determine to remain with Leonidas;

The dread of unavoidable and immediate death deterred the other allies from concurring with this magnanimous resolution. The Thespians, alone, amounting to seven hundred men, declared they would never forsake Leonidas. They were conducted by the aged wisdom of Demophilus, and the youthful valour of Dithyrambus. Their republic was united in the strictest alliance with Sparta, by which they had been often defended against the usurpation and tyranny of the Thebans. These circumstances added force to their natural generosity of sentiment, and determined them, on this occasion, to adhere with stedfast intrepidity to the measures of their Spartan allies. As the Thespians remained at Thermopylæ, from inclination, and from principles of distinguished bravery, the Thebans were detained by the particular desire of Leonidas, who was not unacquainted

who detains the perfidious Thebans.

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the intended treachery of their republic. The four hundred men whom that perfidious community had sent to acccompany his expedition, he regarded rather as hostages than auxiliaries; nor was he unwilling to employ their doubtful fidelity in a desperate service. He thought that they might be compelled by force, or stimulated by a sense of shame, to encounter the same dangers to which the Spartans and Thespians voluntarily submitted; and without discovering his suspicion of their treachery, he had a sufficient pretence for retaining them, while he dismissed his allies of Peloponnesus, because the Theban territories, lying on the northern side of the isthmus of Corinth, would necessarily be exposed to hostility and devastation, whenever the Barbarians should pass the straits of Thermopylæ. Besides the Thespians [52] and Thebans, the troops who remained with Leonidas consisted of three hundred Spartans, all chosen men and fathers of sons. This valiant band, with unanimous consent, solicited their general to dedicate to the glory of Greece, and their own, the important interval yet allowed them, before they were surrounded by the Persians. The ardour of Leonidas happily conspired with the ready zeal of

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[52] From the narrative of Herodotus, it would seem that the Thespians alone voluntarily remained with Leonidas and the Spartans. Yet the inscription which he cites makes the whole number who fought at Thermopylæ amount to four thousand.

Μυριασιν ποτε τηδε τριηκοσιαις εμαχοντο,
Εκ Πελοποννησου χιλιαδες τετορες.

Isocrates likewise (p. 164.) says, that some Peloponnesians remained to fight.

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CHAP. IX. the soldiers. He therefore commanded them to prepare the last meal of their lives, and to sup like men who should to-morrow dine in Elysium. His own example confirmed the propriety of the command, for he made an abundant repast, in order to furnish strength and spirits for the long continuance of toil and danger.

The Greeks surprise the Persian camp in the night.

It was now the dead of night when the Spartans, headed by Leonidas, marched in a close battalion towards the Persian camp, with resentment heightened by despair.[53] Their fury was terrible, and rendered still more destructive through the defect of Barbarian discipline; for the Persians having neither advanced guards, nor a watch-word, nor confidence in each other, were incapable of adopting such measures for defence, as the sudden emergency required. Many fell by the Grecian spear, but much greater multitudes by the mistaken rage of their own troops, by whom, in the midst of this blind confusion, they could not be distinguished from enemies. The Greeks, wearied with slaughter, penetrated to the royal pavilion; but there, the first alarm of noise had been immediately perceived, amidst the profound silence and tranquillity which usually reigned in the tent of Xerxes: the Great King had seasonably escaped with his favourite

[53] Diodor. l. xi. p. 247. The nocturnal assault, omitted by Herodotus, is mentioned not only by Diodorus, but by Plutarch, Justin, and most other writers. The general panegyric of Plato (in Menex.), of Lysias (Orat. Funeb.), and of Isocrates (Panegyr.), required not their descending into such particulars. Yet, notwithstanding these circumstances, I should have omitted this incident, if it had appeared inconsistent with the honest narrative of Herodotus.

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attendants, to the farther extremity of the encampment. Even here all was tumult, and horror, and despair; the obscurity of night increasing the terror of the Persians, who no longer doubted that the detachment conducted by Epialtes had been betrayed by that perfidious Greek; and that the enemy, reinforced by new numbers, now co-operated with the traitor, and seized the opportunity of assailing their camp, after it had been deprived of the division of Hydarnes, its principal ornament and defence. CHAP. IX.

The approach of day discovered to the Persians a dreadful scene of carnage; but it also discovered to them that their fears had multiplied the number of the enemy, who now retreated in close order to the straits of Thermopylæ. Xerxes, stimulated by the fury of revenge, gave orders to pursue them; and his terrified troops were rather driven than led to the attack, by the officers who marched behind the several divisions, and compelled them to advance by menaces, stripes, and blows. The Grecians, animated by their late success, and persuaded that they could not possibly escape death on the arrival of those who approached by way of the mountain, bravely halted in the widest part of the pass, to receive the charge of the enemy. The shock was dreadful, and the battle was maintained on the side of the Greeks with persevering intrepidity and desperate valour. After their spears were blunted or broken, they attacked, sword in hand, and their short, but massy and well-tempered weapons, made an incredible havoc. Their progress Battle of Thermopylæ.

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was marked by a line of blood, when a Barbarian dart pierced the heart of Leonidas. The contest was no longer for victory and glory, but for the sacred remains of their King. Four times they dispelled the thickening mass of Persians; but as their unexampled valour was carrying off the inestimable prize, the hostile battalions were seen descending the hill, under the conduct of Epialtes. It was now time to prepare for the last effort of generous despair. With close order and resolute minds, the Greeks, all collected in themselves, retired to the narrowest part of the strait, and took post behind the Phocian wall, on a rising ground, where a lion of stone was afterwards erected in honour of Leonidas. As they performed this movement, fortune, willing to afford every occasion to display their illustrious merit, obliged them to contend at once against open force and secret treachery. The Thebans, whom fear had hitherto restrained from defection, seized the present opportunity to revolt; and approaching the Persians with outstretched arms, declared that they had always been their friends; that *their* republic had sent earth and water, as an acknowledgment of their submission to Xerxes; and that it was with the utmost reluctance they had been compelled by necessity to resist the progress of his arms. As they approached to surrender themselves, many perished by the darts of the Barbarians; the remainder saved a perishing life, by submitting to eternal infamy. Meanwhile the Lacedæmonians and Thespians were assaulted on all sides. The nearest of the enemy

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beat down the wall, and entered by the breaches. Their temerity was punished by instant death. In this last struggle every Grecian shewed the most heroic courage; yet if we believe the unanimous report of some Thessalians, and others who survived the engagement, the Spartan Dioneces deserved the prize of valour. When it was observed to him, that the Persian arrows were so numerous, that they intercepted the light of the sun, he said, How favourable a circumstance! the Greeks now fight in the shade! The brothers Alpheus and Maron are likewise particularized for their generous contempt of death, and for their distinguished zeal and energy in the service of their country. What these, and other virtues, could effectuate, the Greeks, both as individuals, and in a body, had already accomplished; but it became impossible for them longer to resist the impetuosity and weight of the darts, and arrows, and other missile weapons, which were continually poured upon them; and they were finally not destroyed or conquered, but buried under a trophy of Persian arms. Two monuments were afterwards erected near the spot where they fell: the inscription of the first announced the valour of a handful of Greeks [54], who had resisted three millions of Barbarians;

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[54] Isocrates, p. 164., makes the Spartans who fought at Thermopylæ amount to one thousand. Diodorus, l. xi. p. 410., agrees with Herodotus, whose narrative is followed in the text. According to the most probable accounts, the Thespians were twice as numerous as the Spartans; although the latter have carried away all the glory of this singular exploit.

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CHAP. IX. the second was peculiar to the Spartans, and contained these memorable words: "Go, stranger, and declare to the Lacedæmonians, that we died here in obedience to their divine laws." [55]

[55] Ω ξεινε αγγειλον Λακεδαιμονιοις ὁτι τηδε
Κειμεθα τοις κεινων ρημασι πειθομενοι.
Herodot. c. cxxviii.

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CHAP. X.

Sea Fight off Artemisium. — Xerxes ravages Phocis. — Enters Attica. — Magnanimity of the Athenians. — Sea Fight off Salamis. — Xerxes leaves Greece. — His miserable Retreat. — Campaign of Mardonius. — Battles of Platæa and Mycale. — Issue of the Persian Invasion.

CHAP. X.

Disaster of the Persian fleet on the coast of Thessaly.

DURING the military operations at Thermopylæ, the Grecian fleet was stationed in the harbour of Artemisium, the northern promontory of Eubœa. That of the Persians, too numerous for any harbour to contain, had anchored in the road that extends between the city of Castanæa and the promontory of Sepias, on the coast of Thessaly. Here this formidable armada suffered the calamities foretold by the wisdom of Artabanus. In a conversation with Xerxes, that prudent old man had warned him against two enemies, the sea and the land, from whom his own rash inexperience seemed not to apprehend any danger. Yet both these enemies occasioned dreadful misfortunes to the Persians, whose numbers first exposed them to be destroyed at sea by a tempest, and afterwards to perish on land by a famine. The first line of their fleet was sheltered by the coast of Thessaly; but the other lines, to the number of seven, rode at

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anchor, at small intervals, with the prows of the vessels turned to the sea. When they adopted this arrangement, the waters were smooth, the sky clear, the weather calm and serene; but on the second morning after their arrival on the coast, the day began to lower, and the appearance of the heavens grew threatening and terrible. A dreadful storm of rain and thunder succeeded; and, what was more alarming, the billows began to rise to an amazing height, occasioned by a violent Hellespontin, or north-east wind, which, when it once begins to blow in those seas with any considerable force, seldom ceases for several days. The nearest vessels were saved by hauling under the shore: of the more remote many were driven from their anchors; some foundered at sea, others split on the promontory of Sepias, and several bulged on the shallows of Melibæa. Three days the tempest raged with unabating fury. Four hundred galleys were destroyed by its violence, beside such a number of storeships and transports, that the Persian commanders, suspecting this disaster might occasion the revolt of the Thessalians, fortified themselves with a rampart of considerable height, entirely composed of the shattered fragments of the wreck. [1]

The Persians sail to the Pegasean bay.

This bulwark was sufficient to protect them against the irruptions of the Greeks; but it could not defend them against the more dangerous fury of the waves. In a short time, there-

[1] Herodot. l. vii. c. 188. & seq. Diodor. Sicul. l. xi. c. 12.

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fore, they quitted their insecure station at Sepias, and with eight hundred ships of war, besides innumerable vessels of burden, sailed into the Pegasean bay, and anchored in the road of Apheté, which, at the distance of a few miles, lies directly opposite to the harbour of Artemisium.

The commanders of the Grecian fleet think of returning southward;

The Grecians had posted centinels on the heights of Eubœa to observe the consequences of the storm, and to watch the motions of the enemy. When informed of the dreadful disaster which had befallen them, they poured out a joyous libation, and sacrificed, with pious gratitude, to "Neptune the Deliverer;" but the near approach of such a superior force, soon damped their transports of religious festivity. Neptune had favoured them in the storm, yet this capricious god might assist their enemies in the engagement. In the council of war, called to deliberate on this important subject, it was the general opinion of the commanders, that they ought immediately to retire southward. The Eubœans, whose coasts must have thus been abandoned to the fury of invaders, were peculiarly interested in opposing this pusillanimous resolution. The passage into the continent of Greece, they observed, was still guarded by the magnanimity of Leonidas, and the bravery of the Spartans. Following this generous example, the Grecian fleet, however inferior in strength, ought to resist the Persians, and to protect the estates and families of a rich and populous island.[2] This

[2] Heredot. l. viii. c. 2. & seq.

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remonstrance had not any effect on the determined purpose of Euribiades the Spartan, who, on account of the ancient pre-eminence of his republic, was entrusted with the command of the fleet; an honour rather due to the personal merit of Themistocles, and the naval superiority of Athens.

but are prevailed on to remain at Artemisium, by the address of Themistocles.

To the Athenian commander the Eubœans secretly applied, and, by a present of thirty talents, engaged him to use his influence to retain the Grecian armament for the defence of their coasts. Themistocles was well pleased at being bribed into a measure which his good sense and discernment approved. By a proper distribution of only eight talents, he brought over the other captains to his opinion, and thus effectually promoted the interest, and secured the good-will, of the Eubœans, while he retained for himself an immense sum of money, which might be usefully employed, on many future occasions, in fixing, by largesses and expensive exhibitions, the fluctuating favour of his fellow-citizens.

Both sides prepare for battle.

Meanwhile the Persians, having recovered from the terrors of the storm, prepared for the engagement. As they entertained little doubt of victory, they had determined not to begin the attack, until they had sent two hundred of their best sailing vessels around the isle of Eubœa, to intercept the expected flight of the enemy through the narrow Euripus. In order to conceal this design, they ordered the detached ships to stand out to sea until they lost sight of the eastern coast of Eubœa, sailing behind the little

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island of Sciathus, and afterwards shaping their course by the promontories of Caphaneus and Gerestus. The stratagem, concerted with more than usual judgment, was, however, discovered to the Greeks, by Scyllias, a native of Scioné, now serving in the Persian fleet, but who had long languished for an opportunity of deserting to his countrymen. While the attention of the Barbarians was employed in the preparations necessary for their new arrangement, Scyllias availed himself of his dexterity in diving, to swim, unperceived, to a boat which had been prepared at a sufficient distance, in which he fortunately escaped to Artemisium. He immediately gained admittance to the Grecian council, where the boldness of his enterprise gave persuasion to his words. In consequence of his seasonable and important information, the Greeks determined to continue till midnight in the harbour, and then weighing anchor, to sail in quest of the fleet which had been sent out to prevent their escape. But this stratagem, by which they would have met the art of the enemy with similar address, was not carried into execution. The advice-boats, which had been immediately dispatched to observe the progress of the Persians, returned before evening, without having seen any ships approaching in that direction.

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The first sea-fight at Artemisium.

This intelligence was welcome to the Greeks, who were unwilling, without evident necessity, to abandon their present posture. The enemy, who had lately suffered so severely in the storm, were now further weakened by a considerable diminu-

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tion of their fleet. The strength of the adverse parties being thus reduced nearer to an equality, the weaker seized the opportunity to display their courage in fight, and their superior skill in naval action. About sun-set they approached in a line, and offered battle to the Persians. The latter did not decline the engagement, as their ships were still sufficiently numerous to surround those of their opponents. At the first signal the Greeks formed into a circle, at the second they began the fight. Though crowded into a narrow compass, and having the enemy on every side, they soon took thirty of their ships, and sunk many more. Night came on, accompanied with impetuous bursts of rain and thunder; the Greeks retired into the harbour of Artemisium; the enemy were driven to the coast of Thessaly. As the wind blew from the south, the dead bodies and wrecks dashed with violence against the sides of their ships, and disturbed the motion of their oars. The Barbarians were seized with consternation and despair; for scarcely had they time to breathe, after the former storm and shipwreck near Mount Pelion, when they were compelled to a dangerous sea-fight; after darkness put an end to the battle, they were again involved in the gloom and horrors of a nocturnal tempest. By good fortune, rather than by design, the greatest part of the fleet escaped immediate destruction, and gained the Pegasean Bay. *Their* calamities were great and unexpected; but the ships ordered to sail round Eubœa met with a still more dreadful disaster, They were overtaken by

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the storm, after they had adventured farther from the shore than was usual with the wary mariners of antiquity. Clouds soon intercepted the stars, by which alone they directed their course. They were driven they knew not whither by the force of the winds, or impelled by the impetuosity of currents. In addition to these misfortunes, they were terrified by the thunder, and overwhelmed by the deluge; and after continuing during the greatest part of the night, the sport of the elements, they all perished[3] miserably, amidst the shoals and rocks of an unknown coast. CHAP. X.

The morning arose with different prospects and hopes to the Persians and Greeks. To the former it discovered the extent of their misfortunes; to the latter it brought a reinforcement of fifty-three Athenian ships. Encouraged by this favourable circumstance, they determined again to attack the enemy, at the same hour as on the preceding day, because their knowledge of the coast, and their skill in fighting their ships, rendered the dusk peculiarly propitious to their designs. At the appointed time, they sailed towards the road of Apheté, and having cut off the Cicilian squadron from the rest, totally destroyed it, and returned at night to Artemisium.

The second sea-fight at Artemisium.

The Persian commanders being deeply affected with their repeated disasters, but still more alarmed at the much dreaded resentment of their king, they determined to make one

[3] Herodot. l. viii. c. 13. Diodor. l. xi. c. 13.

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vigorous effort, for restoring the glory of their arms. By art and stratagem, and under favour of the night, the Greeks had hitherto gained many important advantages. It now belonged to the Persians to chuse the time for action. On the third day at noon, they sailed forth in the form of a crescent, which was still sufficiently extensive to infold the Grecian line. The Greeks, animated by former success, were averse to decline any offer of battle; yet it is probable that their admirals, and particularly Themistocles, would much rather have delayed it to a more favourable opportunity. Rage, resentment, and indignation, supplied the defect of the Barbarians in skill and courage. The battle was longer, and more doubtful, than on any former occasion; many Grecian vessels were destroyed; five were taken by the Egyptians, who particularly signalized themselves on the side of the Barbarians, as the Athenians did on that of the Greeks. The persevering valour of the latter at length prevailed, the enemy retiring, and acknowledging their superiority, by leaving them in possession of the dead and the wreck. But the victory cost them dear; since their vessels, particularly those of the Athenians, were reduced to a very shattered condition; and their great inferiority in the number and size of their ships, made them feel more sensibly every diminution of strength.

The Greeks sail to the Saronic Gulph.

This circumstance was sufficient to make them think of retiring (while they might yet retire in safety) to the shores of the Corinthian Isthmus.

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The inclination to this measure received additional force from considering, that the Persians, however unfortunate by sea, had still an immense army; whereas the principal hope of Greece centered in its fleet. While the commanders were occupied with these reflections, Abronycus, an Athenian, who had been entrusted with a galley of thirty oars, to cruise in the Malian bay, and to watch the event of the battle of Thermopylæ, arrived with an account of the glorious death of Leonidas. The engagements by sea and land had been fought on the same day. In both the Greeks defended a narrow pass, against a superior power; and in both the Persians had, with very different success, attempted, by surrounding, to conquer them. The intelligence brought by Abronycus confirmed their resolution of sailing southward; for it seemed of very little importance to defend the shores, after the enemy had obtained possession of the centre of the northern territories. Having passed the narrow Euripus, they coasted along the shore of Attica, and anchored in the strait of the Saronic Gulph, which separates the island of Salamis from the harbours of Athens. [4]

Themistocles's stratagem for making the Ionians desert their allies.

Before they left Artemisium, Themistocles, ever watchful to promote the interest of his country, endeavoured to alienate[5] from the Great King the affections of his bravest auxiliaries. Contrary to the advice of the prudent Artabanus, Xerxes had conducted the Asiatic Greeks to an unnatural expedition against their mother-

[4] Herodot. l. viii. c. 21.

[5] Ibid. l. viii. c. 22.

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country. His wise kinsman in vain persuaded him to send them back, because it appeared equally dishonourable and dangerous to depend on the service of men, which could only be employed in his favour at the expence of every principle of duty, and of every sentiment of virtue. By hope and fear, by threats and promises, and chiefly by honouring them with marks of distinguished preference, Xerxes had hitherto preserved their reluctant fidelity. In order at once to destroy a connection, which of its own accord seemed ready to dissolve, Themistocles engraved on the rocks, near the watering-place of Artemisium, the following words: "Men of Ionia, your conduct is most unjust in fighting against your ancestors, and in attempting to enslave Greece; resolve, therefore, while it is yet in your power, to repair the injury. — If you cannot immediately desert from the Persian fleet, yet it will be easy for you to accomplish this design when we come to an engagement. You ought to remember, that yourselves gave occasion to the quarrel between us and the Barbarians; and farther, that the same duties which children owe to their parents, colonies owe to their mother-country." [6]

Xerxes advances with his army towards Attica.

When news arrived that the Grecian fleet had abandoned Artemisium, Xerxes regarded this retreat of the enemy as equal to a victory. He therefore issued orders, that his naval force, after ravaging the coasts of Eubœa, should proceed to

[6] This sentiment is the dictate of nature, and occurs often in the Roman as well as the Greek writers. "Quæ liberi parentibus, ea coloni antiquæ patriæ debent." T. Livius.

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take possession of the harbours of Athens; while, at the head of his resistless army, he intended to make a victorious procession, rather than a march, into the Attic territory. The road thither from Thermopylæ passed through the countries of Phocis and Bœotia, the latter of which had already acknowledged his authority. The Phocians adhered to the cause of Greece; and were still farther confirmed in their allegiance, after the Thessalians, their inveterate enemies, had embraced the party of Xerxes. Such were the violent animosities which divided these hostile states, that, in the opinion of Herodotus, whichever side the Thessalians had taken, the Phocians would still have opposed them. He might perhaps have extended the observation to the other principal republics. The enthusiasm of Athens and Sparta in defending the cause of Greece, rendered the rival states of Thebes and Argos zealous in the service of Persia; and it is to be remembered, to the immortal glory of the friends of liberty and their country, that they had to struggle with domestic sedition, while they opposed and defeated a foreign invasion.

Ravages Phocis.

Having entered the territory of Phocis, the Persian army separated into two divisions, with a view to obtain more plentiful supplies of food and forage, and to destroy more completely the possessions of their enemies. The most numerous division followed the course of the river Cephissus, which flows from the Thessalian mountains to the lake Copais in Bœotia. The fertile banks of the Cephissus were adorned by Charadra, Neon, Elatæa, and other populous

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cities, all of which were burned or demolished by the fury of Xerxes, and the resentment of the Thessalians. Historians particularly regret the destruction of the sacred walls of Abé, a city held in peculiar respect on account of the temple of Apollo, famed for its unerring oracles, and enriched from the earliest times by the revered donations of superstition. The inhabitants had in general abandoned their towns, and taken refuge in the most inaccessible retreats of mount Parnassus. But the natives of Abé, vainly confiding for safety in the sanctity of the place, became a prey to an undistinguishing rage, which equally disregarded things sacred and profane. The men perished by the sword, the women by the brutal lust of the Barbarians.

Extraordinary adventure of a detachment that attacked Delphi.

After committing these dreadful ravages, the principal division of the army marched into Bœotia, by the way of Orchomenus. The *smaller* part (if either portion of such an immense host may be distinguished by that epithet) stretched to the right, along the western skirts of Mount Parnassus, and traced a line of devastation from the banks of the Cephissus to the temple of Delphi. Such was the fame of the immense riches collected in this sacred edifice, that Xerxes is said to have been as well acquainted with their amount as with that of his own treasury; and, to believe the adulation of his followers, he alone was worthy to possess that invaluable depository. The Delphians having learned, by the unhappy fate of Abé, that their religious employment could not afford protection, either to their property or to their persons, con-

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sulted the oracle, "Whether they should hide their treasures under ground, or transport them to some neighbouring country?" The Pythia replied, "That the arms of Apollo were sufficient for the defence of his shrine." The Delphians, therefore, confined their attention to the means necessary for their personal safety. The women and children were transported by sea to Achaia; the men climbed to the craggy tops of Mount Cirphis, or descended to the deep caverns of Parnassus. Only sixty persons, the immediate ministers of Apollo, kept possession of the sacred city. But, could we credit the testimony of ancient historians, it soon appeared that the gods had not abandoned Delphi: scarcely had the Persians reached the temple of Minerva the Provident, situate at a little distance from the town, when the air thickened into an unusual darkness. A violent storm arose; the thunder and lightning were terrible. At length the tempest burst on Mount Parnassus, and separated from its sides two immense rocks, which rolling down with increased violence, overwhelmed the nearest ranks of the Persians. The shattered fragments of the mountain, which long remained in the grove of Minerva, were regarded by the credulity of the Greeks as a standing proof of the miracle. But without supposing any supernatural intervention, we may believe that an extraordinary event, happening on an extraordinary occasion, would produce great terror and consternation in the Barbarian army, since many of the nations which composed it acknowledged the divinity of Apollo,

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and must therefore have been sensible of their intended impiety, in despoiling his temple. The awful solemnity of the place conspired with the horrors of the tempest, and the guilty feelings of their own consciences. These united terrors were sufficient to disturb all the rational principles of their minds, and even to confound the clearest perceptions of their senses. They believed that they heard many sounds which they did not hear; and that they saw many phantoms which to the mind's eye only were visible. An universal panic seized them; at first they remained motionless, in silent amazement; they afterwards fled with disordered steps and wild despair. The Delphians, who perceived their confusion, and who believed that the gods, by the most manifest signs, defended their favourite abode, rushed impetuously from their fastnesses, and destroyed great numbers of the terrified and unresisting enemy.[7] The remainder took the road of Bœotia, in order to join the main body under Xerxes, which having already destroyed the hostile cities of Thespiæ and Platæa, was marching with full expectation, to inflict complete vengeance on the Athenians.

Xerxes invades Attica.

The united army arrived in the Attic territory three months after their passage over the Hellespont. They laid waste the country, burned the cities, and levelled the temples with the ground. At length, they took possession of the capital; but the inhabitants, by a retreat no less prudent than magnanimous, had withdrawn from the fury of their resentment.

[7] Herodot. l. viii. c. 37. & seq. & Diodor. l. xi. p. 250.

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which the Athenians had evacuated,

It was impossible for the Athenians at once to oppose the Persian army, which marched from Bœotia, and to defend the western coast of Greece against the ravages of a numerous fleet. The inhabitants of Peloponnesus, despairing of being able to resist the enemy in the open field, had begun to build a wall across the isthmus of Corinth, as their only security on the side of the land against the Barbaric invasion. Under these circumstances, the Athenians, by the advice of Themistocles, embraced a resolution which eclipsed the glory of all their former exploits. They abandoned to the Persian rage their villages, their territory, their walls, their city itself, with the revered tombs of their ancestors; their wives, and children, and aged parents were transported to the isles of Salamis and Ægina, and to the generous city of Trœzené, on the Argolic coast, which, notwithstanding the defection of Argos, the capital of that province, stedfastly adhered to the maxims of patriotism, and the duties of friendship. The embarkation was made with such haste, that the inhabitants were obliged to leave behind them their household furniture, their statues and pictures, and in general the most valuable part of their property. But they were willing to relinquish all for the sake of their country, which they well knew consisted not in houses, lands, and effects [8], but in that

[8] Ου λιθοι, ουδε ξυλα ουδε
Τυχην τεκτονων αι πολεις εισιν,
Αλλ' οπη ποτ' αν ωσιν ΑΝΔΡΕΣ
Αυτες σωζειν ειδοτες,
Εστιουθ τειχη και πολεις.

ALCÆUS, apud Aristid.

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equal constitution of government, which they had received from their ancestors, and which it was their duty to transmit unimpaired to posterity. This constitution it was impossible for them to defend, unless they determined, at the risk of their lives, and of every thing dear to them, to maintain the general independence of the Grecian confederacy; the interest of which became doubly precious, by being thus inseparably connected with their own.

and embarked in the fleet at Salamis.

The Athenians capable of bearing arms, or of handling an oar, embarked on board the fleet stationed at Salamis. The ships equipped and manned by them alone, exceeded in number those of all their allies together, although the combined force was considerably augmented by the naval strength of Epirus and Acarnania, which, formerly doubtful and irresolute, had been determined to the side of Greece by the fortunate issue of the engagements at Artemisium. The whole Grecian armament, thus increased, amounted to three hundred and eighty vessels. That of the Persians, which now took possession of the Athenian harbours, laying to the south of the strait occupied by the Greeks, had also received a powerful reinforcement. The Locrians, Bœotians, and in general every people who had submitted to their arms, readily supplying them with ships; and several of the Egæan islands having at length prepared the contingents which they had respectively been commanded to furnish. We are not exactly informed of the number or strength of the additional squadron; but it was

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supposed fully to compensate the loss occasioned by storms and sea-fights, and to restore the Persian fleet to its original complement of twelve hundred sail.[a]

Xerxes determines to fight again at sea.

Trusting to the immense superiority of his armament, Xerxes was still desirous to make trial of his fortune at sea, notwithstanding his former disasters on that element. But, before he came to a final resolution, he summoned a council of war, in order to hear the opinion of his maritime subjects or allies. The tributary kings of Tyre and Sidon, the leaders of the Egyptians, Cyprians, and Cilicians, ever ready to flatter the passions of their sovereign, offered many frivolous reasons in favour of the alternative to which they perceived him inclined. But in the fleet of Xerxes there was a Grecian queen named Artemisia, widow of the prince of Halicarnassus, and who had assumed the government of that city and territory for the benefit of her infant son. Compelled by the order of Xerxes, or perhaps irritated against the Athenians for some reasons which history does not record, she not only fitted out five ships to attend the Persian expedition, but took upon herself the command of her little squadron, and on every occasion conducted it with equal skill and bravery. Such vigour of mind, united with so delicate a form, deserved to excite admiration in every part of the world; but the manly spirit of Artemisia becomes still more admirable, when we consider the severe restraints which have been in all ages imposed on the fe-

Is powerfully dissuaded from that measure by Artemisia.

[a] Herodot. Diodor. ubi supra; et Plut. in Themistocle.

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CHAP. X. male sex, by the manners and climate of Asia. Her superior genius recommended her to the peculiar favour of Xerxes, who was obliged to esteem in a woman the virtues which he himself wanted spirit to practise. Trusting to his advantageous opinion of her courage and fidelity, Artemisia dissented from the general voice of the allies, and even opposed the inclination of the prince. "Her former exploits on the coast of Eubœa afforded sufficient proof that her present advice was not the child of timidity. She had been ever forward to expose her person and her fame in the service of the Great King; but it was impossible to dissemble the manifest superiority of the Greeks in naval affairs. Yet, were the two armaments as much on a foot of equality in point of bravery and experience, as they were unequal in numbers, what motive could induce Xerxes to venture another engagement at sea? Was he not already in possession of Athens, the great object of the war? The Spartans, who had opposed his progress at Thermopylæ, had reaped the just fruits of their temerity: those assembled at the isthmus of Corinth might easily be involved in a similar fate. The Peloponnesus might then be laid waste by fire and sword, which would complete the destruction of Greece. Instead of proceeding immediately to that peninsula, should Xerxes choose to continue only a few weeks in the Attic territory, four hundred Grecian ships could not long be supplied with provisions from the barren rocks of Salamis. Necessity must compel them to surrender, or drive

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them to their respective cities, where they would become an easy prey to the Persian arms." These judicious observations were heard without approbation; the worst opinion prevailed, being the best adapted to flatter the vanity of Xerxes.

Deliberations of the Greeks,

When the Grecian commanders observed that the enemy prepared to venture another engagement at sea, they likewise assembled to deliberate whether they should continue in the strait between Salamis and Attica, or proceed further up the gulph, towards the Corinthian isthmus. The latter proposal was generally approved by the confederates of Peloponnesus, who anxiously desired, in the present emergency, to approach as near as possible to their respective cities. Some hastened to their ships, and hoisted sail in order to depart; and it seemed likely that their example would be soon followed by the whole fleet. On board the ship of Themistocles was Mnesiphilus, formerly mentioned as the instructor of his youth, and who now accompanied him as his counsellor and friend. The experienced wisdom of Mnesiphilus readily discerned, that should the Greeks sail from Salamis, it would be impossible to prevent the general dispersion of their armament. He therefore exhorted Themistocles to endeavour, by all possible means, to prevent this fatal measure; and particularly to persuade the Spartan admiral, Euribiades, to alter his present intention.

guided by the abilities of Themistocles,

Themistocles readily embraced the opinion of his friend. Having waited on Euribiades, he obtained his consent to summon a second assembly

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of the confederates. After they were fully convened, the Athenian began to call their attention to the state of their affairs; but his discourse was insolently interrupted by Adimantus, the commander of the Corinthians, who had constantly discovered a particular solicitude for returning to the isthmus. Themistocles, no less prudent than brave, answered his reproaches with calmness, and then addressing himself to Euribiades, "The fate of Greece," says he, "depends on the decision of the present moment, and that decision on you; if you resolve to sail to the isthmus, we must abandon Salamis, Megara, and Ægina; we shall be compelled to fight in an open sea, where the enemy may fully avail themselves of their superior numbers; and, as the Persian army will certainly attend the motions of their fleet, we shall draw their combined strength towards the Grecian peninsula, our last and only retreat. But if you determine to retain the ships in their present station, the Persians will find it impossible, in a narrow channel, to attack us at once with their whole force: we shall preserve Megara and Salamis, and we shall effectually defend Peloponnesus; for the Barbarians being, as I firmly trust, defeated in a naval engagement, will not penetrate further than Attica, but return home with disgrace." He had scarcely ended his words, when Adimantus broke forth into new invectives, affecting surprise that Euribiades should listen to a man, who, since the taking of Athens, had not any city to defend: that the Athenians ought *then* to have a voice in the

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council, when they could say they had a home. Themistocles replied, "that the Athenians had indeed undervalued their private estates and possessions, in comparison of their political independence and the general safety of Greece, and gloriously abandoned their *city* in defence of their *country*. But notwithstanding this sacrifice for the public good, they had still an home far more valuable than Corinth, two hundred ships of war well armed and manned, which no nation of Greece could resist. That should the confederates persist in their present dangerous resolution, the Athenians would in these ships embark their wives and families; desert allies, which had first forsaken themselves; and repair to the coast of Italy, where it was foretold by ancient oracles, that Athens should, in some future time, form a great and flourishing settlement. That the Greeks would then remember and regret the advice of Themistocles, when, abandoned by the most considerable member of their league, they became an easy prey to the Barbarian invader." The firmness of this discourse shook the resolution of the confederates; and it was determined by the majority to remain at Salamis.

Between this important resolve and the engagement, there intervened a moment of the most anxious solicitude. The minds of men, impressed with an awful anticipation of the events about to be transacted, were thrown off their ordinary bias; and as the operations of nature, and the agency of invisible beings, are always fondly connected in the imagination with the momentous

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concerns of human life, the Greeks felt, or believed they felt, extraordinary convulsions of the elements; they saw hideous spectres in the air; and heard, or fancied they heard, the most terrible and threatening voices.[10] But all these strange and supernatural appearances, which would otherwise have been doubtful or alarming, were proved, by a clear and explicit oracle, to foretel the destruction of the Barbarians.

ready to change their opinion;

Notwithstanding this favourable intimation of the divine will, which was carefully improved by the wisdom and eloquence of Themistocles, the Peloponnesians were ready to return to their first determination. A vessel arriving from the isthmus, brought advice that the fortifications there were almost completed; if the fleet retired to the neighbouring shore, the sailors might, even after a defeat at sea, take refuge behind their walls; but if conquered near the coasts of Salamis, they would be for ever separated from their families and friends, and confined, without hope or resource, within the narrow limits of a barren island. In important alternatives, when the arguments on each side are almost equally persuasive, the party which we have embraced often appears the worst, merely because we have embraced it. Any new circumstance or consideration is always capable of changing the balance, and we hastily approve what we rejected after much deliberation. Lest this propensity should, as there was much reason to fear, again discon-

prevented by a daring mea-

[10] Lysias Fun. Orat. Herodot. ibid.

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sure of Themistocles.

cert his measures, Themistocles determined to prevent the Greeks from the possibility of gratifying it. There commonly lived in his family a man named Sicinus, who at present accompanied him. He was originally a slave, and employed in the education of his children; but by the generosity of his patron, had acquired the rank of citizen, with considerable riches. The firmness and fidelity of this man rendered him a proper instrument for executing a stratagem, which concealed, under the mask of treachery, the enthusiasm of public virtue. Having received his instructions from Themistocles, he privately sailed to the Persian fleet, and obtaining admission into the presence of Xerxes, declared "That he had been sent by the captain of the Athenians, who could no longer endure the insolence of his countrymen, to acquaint the Great King, that the Greeks, seized with consternation at the near approach of danger, had determined to make their escape under cover of the night; that now was the time for the Persians to achieve the most glorious of all their exploits, and by intercepting the flight of their enemies, accomplish their destruction at [11] once." The advice was believed; the whole day, and the greatest part of the succeeding night, the Persians employed in securing the several passages between the islands and the adjacent coast; and that nothing might be neglected that could contribute to their success, they filled the little isle,

[11] Herodot. l. viii. c. lxxv.

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or rather rock, of Psyttalea, lying between Salamis and the continent, with the flower of the Persian infantry, in order to intercept the miserable remnant of the Greeks, who, after their expected defeat, would fly thither for refuge.

His interview with Aristides.

The first intelligence of these operations was brought to the Grecian fleet by Aristides the Athenian, who seems not to have availed himself of the general act of indemnity to return from banishment, but who readily embraced every opportunity to serve his country. Having with difficulty escaped in a small vessel from the isle of Ægina, the generous patriot immediately communicated an account of what he had seen there to his rival and enemy, Themistocles, who, meeting his generosity with equal frankness, made him the confident of his secret. Their interview was as memorable as the occasion; and, after a continued life of opposition and hatred, they now first agreed to suspend their private animosities, in order to promote the common interest of their country. As the Peloponnesian commanders were either wavering and irresolute, or had determined to set sail, Aristides was desired to inform them of the arrangement which he had seen; the consideration of his country, however, rendered his evidence suspected, and it was imagined that he meant to sacrifice the general interest of the confederates to the safety of the Athenian families in Salamis. But the arrival of a vessel belonging to the isle of Tenos confirmed the veracity of his report, and the

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Peloponnesians resolved to fight, because it was impossible to fly.[12]

Sea-fight off the isle of Salamis.

Before the dawn of the day the Grecian ships were drawn up in order of battle; and the Persians, who had been surprised at not finding them attempt to escape during night, were still more surprised when morning discovered their artful orderly arrangement. The Greeks began with the light their sacred hymns and pœans, which preceded their triumphal songs of war, accompanied by the animating sound of the trumpet. The shores of Attica re-echoed to the rocks of Salamis and Psyttalea. The Grecian acclamations filled the sky. Neither their appearance nor their words betokened flight or fear, but rather determined intrepidity and invincible courage. Yet was their valour tempered with wisdom. Themistocles delayed the attack until the ordinary breeze should spring up, which was no less favourable to the experience of the Grecian mariners, than dangerous to the lofty unwieldiness of the Persian ships.[13] The signal was then given for the Athenian line to bear down against that of the Phœnicians, which rode on the west, off the coast of Eleusis; while the Peloponnesians advanced against the enemy's left wing stationed on the east, near the harbour of the Piræus. The Persians, confiding in their number, and secure of victory, did not decline the fight. A Phœnician galley, of uncommon size and strength, was distinguished in the front of

[12] Herodot. l. viii. c. lxxix. et seq.

[13] Id. ibid.

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CHAP. X. their line by every circumstance of naval pomp. In the eagerness to engage, she far outstripped her companions; but her career was checked midway between the two fleets by an Athenian galley which had sailed forth to meet her. The first shock shattered her sculptured prow, the second buried her in the waves. The Athenians, encouraged by this auspicious prelude, proceeded with their whole force, animating each other to the combat by a martial song: "Advance, ye sons of Athens, save your country, defend your wives and children, deliver the temples of your gods, regain the sacred tombs of your renowned forefathers; *this day*, the common cause of Greece demands your valour." The battle was bloody and destructive, and disputed on the side of the Persians with more obstinate resistance than on any former occasion; for, from the Attic coast, seated on a lofty throne on the top of Mount Ægialos, Xerxes observed the scene of action, and attentively remarked, with a view to reward and punish, the various behaviour of his subjects. The presence of their prince operated on their hopes, and still more powerfully on their fears. But neither the hope of acquiring the favour, nor the fear of incurring the displeasure of a despot, could furnish principles of action worthy of being compared with the patriotism and love of liberty which actuated the Greeks. To the dignity of their motives, as much as to the superiority of their skill, the latter owed their unexampled success in this memorable engagement. The foremost ships of the Phœnicians

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were dispersed or sunk. Amidst the terror and confusion occasioned by their repulse, they ran foul of those which had been drawn up in two lines behind them. The Athenians skilfully encircled them around, compressed them into a narrower space, and increased their disorder; they were at length entangled in each other, deprived of all power of action, and, to use the humble, but expressive figure of an eye-witness, "caught and destroyed like fish in a [14] net." Such was the fate of the right wing; while the Ionians, who, on the left, opposed the fleets of Peloponnesus and Ægina, furnished them with an opportunity to complete the victory. Many of the Asiatic Greeks, mindful of the advice given by Themistocles, abandoned the interest of the Great King, and openly declared for their countrymen; others declined the engagement; the remainder were sunk or put to flight. Among those which escaped was the ship of Queen Artemisia, who in the battle of Salamis displayed superior courage and conduct: she was closely pursued by an Athenian galley, commanded by Amenias, brother of the poet Æschylus. In this extremity, she employed a successful, but very unwarrantable stratagem. The nearest Persian vessel was commanded by Damasithymus, a tributary prince of Calynda in Lycia, a man with whom Artemisia was at variance. With great dexterity, she darted the beak of her galley against the Lycian vessel. Damasithymus was buried in the waves; and Amenias, deceived by

The Persians totally defeated.

[14] Æschylus Persæ.

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this measure, equally artful and audacious, believed the vessel of Artemisia one of those which had deserted the Persian interest. The Phœnician and Ionian squadrons (for that of the Egyptians had been exceedingly weakened by the action on the coast of Eubœa) formed the main strength of the Persian armament; after these were defeated, the ships at a distance ventured not to advance, but hastily changing sail, measured back their course to the Athenian and other neighbouring harbours. The victors disdaining to pursue them, dragged the most valuable part of the wreck to the coasts of Psyttalea and Salamis. The narrow seas were covered with the floating carcases of the dead, among whom were few Greeks, as even those who lost their ships in the engagement, saved their lives by swimming, an art which they universally learned as a necessary branch of education, and with which the Barbarians were totally unacquainted. [15]

Xerxes had scarcely time to consider and deplore the destruction and disgrace of his fleet, when a new spectacle, not less mournful, offered itself to his sight. The flower of the Persian infantry had taken post, as we have already observed, on the rocky island of Psyttalea, in order to receive the shattered remains of the Grecian armament, which, after its expected defeat, would naturally take refuge on that barren coast. But equally fallacious and fatal was their con-

[15] Before this period, it was a law at Athens and other states, τους παιδας διδασκεσθαι πρωτον νειν τε και γραμματα; that boys first learn reading and swimming. Sam. Petit. de Leg. Att. p. 11.

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jecture concerning the event of the battle. The Greeks, disembarking from their ships, attacked, in the enthusiasm of victory, those astonished troops, who, unable to resist, and finding it impossible to fly, were cut down to a man. As Xerxes beheld this dreadful havoc, he started in wild agitation from his silver throne, rent his royal robes, and in the first moment of his returning tranquillity, commanded the main body of his forces, posted along the Athenian coast, to return to their respective camps.

Xerxes determines to leave Greece.

From that moment he resolved to return with all possible expedition into Asia. Yet did his fears and his policy conceal, for a few days, the design not only from the Grecian but from the Persian generals. Mardonius alone was too well acquainted with the temper of his master, to believe that his concern for the safety of his illustrious person would allow him to remain longer than necessary in a country which had been the scene of so many calamities. The artful courtier availed himself of the important secret, to divert the storm of royal resentment which threatened the principal author of this inglorious undertaking. In his first interview with Xerxes, he exhorted him "not to be too deeply affected by the defeat of his fleet: that he had come to fight against the Greeks, not with rafts of wood, but with soldiers and horses: that the valour of the Persians had opposed all resistance, and their invincible sovereign was now master of Athens, the main object of his ambition: that having accomplished the principal end of the enterprise,

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it was time for the Great King to return from the fatigues of war to the cares of government, for with three hundred thousand chosen men he would undertake to prosecute his designs, and to complete his victory." Such is the language of adulation, too often held to princes. The other courtiers confirmed, by their approbation, the advice of Mardonius; and the Persian monarch, while he obeyed the dictates of his own pusillanimity, seemed to leave Greece in reluctant compliance with the anxious solicitude of his subjects.

Mardonius remains there with 300,000 men.

The miserable retreat of his army.

The remains of the Persian fleet, frightened from the coasts of Greece, returned to the harbours of Asia Minor, and afterwards assembled and rendezvoused, during the ensuing winter, in the port of Cymé. The transports were ordered to the Hellespont, on the banks of which Xerxes arrived with his troops in forty-five days, after intolerable hardships and fatigue. Famine and pestilence filled up the measure of their calamities; and, excepting the three hundred thousand chosen men committed to Mardonius, a detachment of whom guarded the royal person to the coast, scarcely a remnant was left of so many millions.[16] The bridge ostentatiously erected on the Hellespont would have presented, had it remained entire, a mortifying monument of past greatness. But this magnificent fabric had been destroyed by a tempest: and such is the obscurity with which Xerxes returned from Greece, compared with the blaze of

[16] Ουδεν μερος ὡς εἰπαι, says Herodotus, emphatically.

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grandeur in which he marched thither, that it is uncertain whether he crossed the channel in a Phœnician ship of war, or only in a [17] fishing-boat. Having returned to Sardes, he endeavoured to compensate for the disappointment of ambition by the gratification of sensuality, and buried himself in pleasures more infamous and degrading, and not less frightfully criminal, than all the disgrace which his pride had incurred, and all the calamities which his subjects had either inflicted or suffered. [18]

Measures taken by the Greeks after their victory.

When the Greeks had leisure to examine the extent and completeness of their success, they determined in the first emotions of triumph and resentment, to pursue the shattered remains of the enemy. That no Barbarian might escape, they purposed immediately to sail northward, and to destroy the Persian bridge across the Hellespont. This design was recommended, and chiefly supported by the Athenians, who having experienced the greatest share of the danger, felt most sensibly the joys of deliverance. But upon more mature deliberation, it occurred that the Persians were still sufficiently numerous to afford just grounds of terror. To their cowardice and inexperience, not to their want of strength, the Greeks owed all their advantages over them; but should the impossibility of retreat be added to their other calamities, they might derive courage from despair, and by

[17] Confer. Herod. Justin. Corn. Nepos.

[18] Herod. et Diodor. ibid.

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efforts hitherto unexerted, repair the consequences of past errors. These considerations, first suggested, it is said, by Euribiades the Spartan, were adopted by Themistocles, who convinced his countrymen that the jealousy of the Grecian gods, unwilling that one man should be lord of Europe and Asia, rather than their own prowess, had given them the victory over Xerxes; a prince of such folly and madness, that he had treated with equal irreverence things human and divine, destroyed the sacred temples, overthrown the venerable altars and images, and impiously insulted the gods of the Hellespont with stripes and fetters. That it was the duty of the Athenians, after having gloriously repelled the common enemy, to provide for the comfortable subsistence of their wives and families, to sow their lands, rebuild their houses, and thus to repair, by the most industrious activity, the dreadful ravages committed in their territories. [19]

Bold stratagem of Themistocles.

Themistocles had no sooner persuaded the Athenians to embrace his opinion, than he secretly dispatched his confidant Sicinus to acquaint the Great King with the danger which he had so nearly escaped, and to advise him to pursue his journey with all possible expedition. Xerxes readily believed a piece of information, which agreed with the suggestions of his own cowardice. The rapidity of his march conspired with other circumstances above mentioned in proving fatal to the lives of his followers; and

[19] Herodot. l. viii. c. 108. et seq.

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the crafty Athenian, who well knowing the unstable affections of the multitude, wished to deserve the gratitude of a king, gained the double advantage of dispelling sooner than could otherwise have happened, that destructive cloud of Barbarians which hovered over his country, and of convincing their leader that he was in part indebted for his safety to that very man whose counsels, rather than the arms of Greece, had occasioned his irreparable disasters and most signal disgrace. CHAP. X.

The victory at Salamis terminated the second act of the Persian expedition, which has, with much propriety, been compared to a tragedy. The Greeks soon understood that, notwithstanding the return of Xerxes, three hundred thousand men, commanded by Mardonius, were cantoned for the winter in Thrace, Macedon, and Thessaly, with a design to take the field early in the spring, and again to try the fortune of war. This intelligence deterred the Athenians from bringing home their wives and children, as they originally intended, from Trœzené, Salamis, and Ægina, because they had reason to dread that their country would experience new effects of Barbarian resentment. It appears, however, that a few citizens, more sanguine in their hopes than the rest, returned to their ancient habitations; while the greater part continued on board the fleet, or went to reside with their friends in the Peloponnesus.

Employment of the Greeks during the winter.

According to modern ideas, it would be natural to expect, that, under the apprehension of another formidable invasion, the Greeks should have

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CHAP X. employed the winter in raising contributions, levying and disciplining troops, and concerting proper measures for the public defence. But such preparations were in some degree unnecessary, because in the Grecian republics almost every citizen was a soldier; and the different states were at all times too weakly united, to agree in any uniform plan of operations. Besides, the customs and prejudices of that early age obliged them to observe many forms and ceremonies, which interfered with employments seemingly more useful, on such an important emergency. We find, accordingly, that instead of increasing or improving their military establishment, the Greeks spent the winter[20] in dividing the spoil; assigning to the different commanders the prizes of conduct and valour; performing the last offices to the dead; celebrating their games and festivals; and displaying, both in the multitude of their prayers, and in the magnificence of their offerings, the warmest gratitude to their protecting divinities. The dedications to the gods were intrinsically valuable. The rewards bestowed on their generals were simple tokens of public esteem. The first consisted in vases, statues, and other ornaments of gold and silver; the second in a wreath of pine, laurel, or olive; a circumstance which made Tigranes the Persian exclaim, "Heavens! against what men have we come to contend? insensible to interest, they fight only for glory!"

[20] Herodot. l. viii. c. 21. et seq.

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CHAP. X. Of the Athenians and Themistocles.

It is not surprising that the institutions of Greece should have deceived an untutored Barbarian, when we consider that even the modern philosopher and historian have been too often dazzled by their splendour. Yet notwithstanding what Tigranes believed, and what, from the fond admiration of antiquity, many modern writers have asserted, the indiscriminate praise of disinterestedness by no means belonged to the Grecians. When the commanders of their several ships and squadrons assembled to regulate the distribution of naval and military rewards, each captain, with a selfishness equally indelicate and unjust, arrogated to himself the first prize of merit; though most of them acknowledged the desert of Themistocles as second to their [21] own. This general assignment of the second, while all alike assumed the first place, was equivalent to a public declaration in favour of the Athenian: and the honours which were conferred on him, both in his own country and in Sparta, sufficiently confirmed the decision. The usual marks of the public esteem were not indeed attended with any immediate profit, but their consequences were extremely beneficial. Supported by the favourable opinion of his countrymen, a commander by sea or land frequently attained an authority, the exercise of which was equally adapted to flatter pride and to gratify avarice. The behaviour of Themistocles, after he had acquired sufficient merit with the public to justify his rapacity,

[21] Herodot. l. viii. c. 23.

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affords one memorable example of this kind; and we shall meet with many more, in examining the subsequent events of the Grecian history. Instead of remaining at home, in order to concert a plan for repelling the danger which threatened his country, the Athenian commander sailed with a little squadron to the Cyclades, laid these unfortunate islands under a heavy contribution, and without the participation, or even knowledge of his colleagues in command, enriched himself and his favourites.[22]

Mardonius prepares to open the campaign.

On the approach of spring, Mardonius prepared to take the field. His army consisted of the Medes, Persians, Scythians, and Indians; and though reduced from the millions which followed Xerxes to about three hundred thousand men, it was thereby rather delivered from an useless incumbrance, than deprived of any real strength. Before marching from Thessaly, his superstition engaged him to consult the Grecian oracles, and moved probably by an erroneous explanation of their ambiguous responses, he determined to try the effect of negociation, before he had recourse to arms. He might treat either with individuals, or with communities. By the former method, the Thebans assured him, that he might become master of Greece, without hazarding a battle. "You have only," said they, "to send money to the leading men in the several republics. In this manner you will divide each state into factions; engage them in a civil war; and, when exhausted by

[22] Herodot. l. viii. c. 75.

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mutual hostilities, they will readily submit to your demands." Mardonius, instead of pursuing this judicious system, which would probably have been successful, sent Alexander, King of Macedon, to treat with such Athenians as had returned to their city. This illustrious ambassador, who boasted an Argive extraction, was the tributary prince of a barbarous country; but of a country destined, in a future age, to attain empire and renown, by the arts of Philip and the arms of his immortal son. The first Alexander was peculiarly well qualified for executing the office with which Mardonius had entrusted him, because his family had long been connected with the republic of Athens, by the sacred ties of hospitality. But his commission was as unwelcome as his visit was acceptable. The Athenians, therefore, delayed calling an assembly to hear and answer his discourse, until the Spartans (who were apprised of the intention of Mardonius) should send ambassadors to assist at the deliberation. When all parties were convened, Alexander declared, "That he was sent to the Athenians on the part of Mardonius, who had received a message from the Great King, intimating his will to forgive their past injuries, to reinstate them in their possessions, to rebuild their houses and temples, and to receive them into the number of his friends and confederates." Mardonius then spoke for himself: "What madness, O Athenians, can impel you to maintain war against a monarch, whom you cannot expect *ever* to conquer, nor hope *always* to resist? You are ac-

Endeavours to detach the Athenians from their allies;

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quainted with the number and prowess of the troops under my command, which, formidable as they are, make but a small part of the unbounded resources of Xerxes. Every year he can invade you with an increasing superiority of strength; submit, therefore, to a power which it is vain to oppose; profit, ere it be too late, of the disposition of the Great King, and accept the offer of an alliance which folly alone, not fortitude and firmness, can engage you to decline." Alexander endeavoured to add weight to these considerations, by observing, "That his past conduct had uniformly proved the sincerity of his attachment to the Athenians; and that he was firmly convinced of the expediency, and even necessity, of the measures now in agitation, otherwise he should not have undertaken to propose them. He therefore exhorted them to reflect on the advantages which would accrue to them from being alone, of all the Greeks, admitted into the alliance of Xerxes; to reflect also on the dreadful consequences which would attend their refusal, since their country, placed as a prize between the contending parties, would thereby be exposed to inevitable destruction."[28]

but without success.

As soon as Alexander had ended his discourse, the Lacedæmonian ambassadors represented to the assembly, "That they had been sent on the part of their republic, to thwart the measures of the Barbarians, with whom, in order to resent the quarrel of her Athenian allies, Sparta had engaged in a bloody and destructive war,

[28] Herodot. l. viii. c. 140.

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Could the Athenians then, for whose sake alone the war which now extended over all Greece was originally undertaken, abandon their friends and confederates, whose services they had every reason to approve? Could they associate with Barbarians, whose hostilities they had every reason to resent? Sparta affectionately sympathised with their sufferings in the loss of their houses and their harvests; yet the confederates in general had endeavoured to prevent or repair the unhappy consequences of their loss: they had maintained their wives and families, supported and educated their helpless children, cherished and sustained the declining years of their parents. Their generosity was not yet exhausted; if the Athenians should be compelled again to abandon their country, they would again find the same hospitable reception in Peloponnesus; and their families, if it became necessary, would be maintained at the common expence, during the continuance of the war. Let them not, therefore, be deceived by the specious words of the tyrant Alexander, who, at the expence of truth, endeavoured to promote the interest of a tyrant like himself. The Athenians ought to remember, that neither justice, nor honour, nor fidelity, can be expected from tyrants and Barbarians." [24] Having thus spoken, the Lacedæmonians, as well as Alexander, withdrew; and the Athenians, after a short deliberation, answered both parties by the voice of Aristides, who, as archon, or chief magistrate, presided in the assembly: first, to the Macedonian they replied, "That as

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[24] Herodot. l. viii. c. 142.

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they were sufficiently acquainted with the strength of Xerxes, he might have spared them the insult of describing its vast superiority to their own. Yet, in defence of liberty, there was no power too great to oppose. Return then, and tell Mardonius, that the Athenians will never make peace with Xerxes, while the sun performs his annual course in the heavens; but that, trusting to the assistance of the Gods and Heroes, whose temples and images the tyrant has impiously destroyed, we will resist him to the last extremity. To conclude: come not a second time to Athens with such insolent messages, indignation at which may make us forget that you are our friend, and connected with us by the sacred ties of reciprocal hospitality." The answer given to the Lacedæmonian ambassadors was delivered in a still higher strain of patriotism: "That the Barbarians, or even the peasants of Laconia, should suppose us capable of coming to an accommodation with the Persians, does not surprise us; but it is indeed surprising that you, citizens of Sparta, should entertain the same groundless fears; you, who have so often heard by report, and who, on so many occasions, have yourselves witnessed, the disinterested magnanimity of our republic. Know then, that the richest possessions on earth, that all the treasures of the Great King, are not sufficient to seduce our unalterable attachment to Greece. The laws of God and man equally forbid our ingratitude; or if all ties of *duty* were dissolved, our *resentment* against the Persians would restrain us. We must avenge our plundered altars, our prostrate

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images, our desolated temples. We must avenge the cause of our allies, and our own; for all the Greeks have the same religion, language, lineage, and manners; and while an Athenian survives, will never, with his consent, make peace with the Barbarians. We acknowledge with gratitude your proffered kindness to our families; but henceforth we hope to provide for them, without giving the confederates any trouble on their account. What we request of you is, that your army march with all possible expedition towards Bœotia, that our united resistance may stop the progress of the Barbarian, who, as soon as he is apprised of our determined hostility, will not fail to proceed southward, to invade Attica a second time."[25] CHAP. X.

The Peloponnesians desert the common cause.

This conjecture was justified by the event. The Persians within a few weeks marched into Bœotia, but the Athenians looked in vain for the expected arrival of their Spartan auxiliaries. To have witnessed the proceedings just described in the Athenian assembly, we should have imagined that there was a generous contest of patriotism between the two republics; and that the happiness and glory of Greece, not the interest of their particular communities, was the great object of their ambition. But the Greeks had often much patriotism in their speeches, when there was little in their hearts; and the Spartans who had lately employed such powerful arguments to engage Athens in defence of the common cause, totally abandoned their principles whenever it suited their conveniency.[26] Instead of issuing forth in

[25] Herodot. l. viii. c. 140. et seq. [26] Lysias, Orat. Funeb.

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order to support their allies in Bœotia, they remained within the isthmus, and endeavoured to fortify that inlet into their territory with such additional walls and bulwarks as might render it impenetrable. The work was now complete; and the Peloponnesians, secure, as they imagined, behind this solid rampart, equally disregarded the safety, and despised the resentment of their northern allies.

Magnanimity of the Athenians.

The Athenians, a second time forsaken by their confederates, were obliged again to desert their country. They had scarcely sailed to their families in Salamis, when Attica was invaded by the Persians. While the fugitives continued in that island, they received another embassy from Mardonius, offering them the same terms which they had formerly rejected. They still persisted in rejecting them; in consequence of which, they beheld, without apparent uneasiness, from the shores of Salamis their territories[27] again laid waste; their cities, and villas, and temples, devoured by the flames; and every thing that had escaped the fury of the first invasion, destroyed or consumed by the second. After committing these ravages, which, as he had already obtained complete possession of the country, deserved to be considered only as the effect of a childish resentment, Mardonius returned into Bœotia, that his troops might be supplied with provisions, and that, should the enemy offer them battle, they might engage in a country better adapted than Attica to the operations of cavalry.

[27] Herodot. l. ix. c. 1. et seq.

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The Athenians, who had been sent from Salamis to remonstrate with the Spartan council against the delays or desertion of the Peloponnesians, were accompanied by ambassadors from Platea and Megara, who confirmed their arguments and complaints. With the indignation of disappointed confidence, they upbraided the indifference and lukewarmness of the Spartans in the common cause; sentiments which ill corresponded with their own generous ardour. They contrasted the base treachery of Sparta, formerly the honour, now the disgrace of Greece, with the patriotic magnanimity of Athens. The latter, they observed, compelled by necessity, or urged by resentment of the shameful dereliction on the part of her allies, would doubtless accept the terms offered by Mardonius, and then the Peloponnesians must become sensible, when it was too late, that the wall across the isthmus formed but a partial and feeble defence; and however it might secure them from inroads on the side of the land, would ill protect their coasts against the descents of the Persian, reinforced by the Athenian fleet. [28]

They remonstrate with their confederates.

Whether the eloquence of the ambassadors, or the returning sense of public utility, overcame the pusillanimous resolutions formerly embraced by the Spartans, it is certain that they now first determined to take the field. Five thousand Spartan pike-men were accompanied by thirty-five thousand Helots. Their Peloponnesian allies

Persuade them to take the field.

[28] Lysias, Orat. Funeb.

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sent their respective contingents; so that the heavy-armed men raised in the peninsula exceeded twenty thousand, commanded by Pausanias, the guardian and kinsman of Plistarchus, son of Leonidas. Having marched beyond the isthmus, they were joined by Aristides, at the head of eight thousand Athenians, and by a superior number of their allies of Megara, Thespiæ, Platea, Salamis, Eubœa, and Ægina. The whole heavy-armed troops amounted to nearly forty thousand; the light-armed were the thirty-five thousand Helots, attendants on the Spartans, and about as many more, one to each soldier, attending the other divisions of the army.[20]

Mardonius encamps on the Æsopus in Bœotia;

Mardonius having marched into Bœotia, encamped on the banks of the Æsopus. His army of three hundred thousand men, while they waited the enemy's approach, of which they were secretly informed by the Argives, were employed in building a square fortification, about five quarters of a mile in front; a work of little utility, since it could only defend a small portion of a camp which extended many miles, from the Theban town of Erythræa, to the territory of the Platæans. The Greeks having arrived in those parts, took post at the foot of mount Citheron, directly opposite to the enemy.

the Greeks on the opposite bank.

Incidents preceding the battle of Platæa.

The hostile armies remained eleven days in their encampments, during which several incidents happened, which tend to display the manners and character of those great bodies of men, who were

[20] Herodot. l. ix. c. i. et seq. Diodor. Sicul. l. xi. et Plut. in Aristid.

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soon to attempt the destruction of each other. Of the Grecians inhabiting the countries north of Attica, the Phocians, as we have already had occasion to observe, were the least disposed to embrace the cause of Mardonius. Yet, as all their neighbours had submitted to his arms, they reluctantly sent to his camp a thousand soldiers, well armed, and commanded by Harmocydes, a citizen of great influence and authority. They had not continued many days in the Persian army, when an order came from Mardonius (the reason was unknown) for the Phocians to be detached from the rest, and encamped in a separate body on the plain. They had no sooner obeyed his command, than the whole Persian cavalry appeared in sight, and soon formed themselves in hostile array. It immediately occurred to the Phocians, and particularly to their prudent commander, that Mardonius, suspecting their fidelity, or yielding to the solicitations of their inveterate enemies, the Thessalians, had resolved on their destruction. Harmocydes, therefore, pointing to the cavalry, called to his companions, "You see those men, who come with an evident intention to destroy us: but let us die like Grecians, and exert ourselves with all the fury of a desperate defence, rather than tamely submit to a dishonourable fate." While he yet spoke, the Phocians seized their arms, arranged themselves in order of battle, and supporting each other in redoubled ranks, presented on every side a firm circle of protended lances. Their warlike appearance struck terror into the surrounding cloud

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CHAP. X. of Barbarians, who advanced brandishing, and a few of the nearest throwing, their javelins: but further they ventured not to proceed; the determined countenance of the Greeks sufficed to repel them; they retired in haste to the Persian camp. A herald was then sent by Mardonius, "desiring the Phocians to take courage, nor to dread farther hostilities; that they had shown themselves to be brave men, contrary to the account which he had received of them; and if they displayed their valour in the Persian cause, they should find it impossible to conquer either Xerxes or himself in good offices." [30]

The above relation tends to prove, that none of the Greeks, not even those who joined the enemy, were deficient in courage. Another incident related by the same historian proves, that notwithstanding the extreme folly of their commanders, the Persians were not universally deficient in wisdom. While they were encamped on the Æsopus, a wealthy Theban named Attaginus, invited Mardonius, with fifty of his most distinguished officers, to a magnificent entertainment. The feast was given at Thebes, and an equal number of Bœotians were called to it. Among these was Thersander, a native of Orchomenus, and a person of the highest distinction in that city. Two of the guests were placed on each couch; and, as Thersander himself related to Herodotus, his Persian companion, after supper, entering into conversation in the Greek tongue, testified, under the seal of secrecy, his gloomy ap-

[30] Herodot. l. ix. c. 1. et seq.

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prehensions concerning the event of the present war. He did not even hesitate to declare his firm persuasion, that few Persians would survive an engagement. When asked by the Theban, Why he did not communicate this opinion to his general? he said, that men of plain sense and honesty had seldom much influence with the great. It appeared from the whole tenor of his discourse, that there were many in the Persian army, who, like himself, lamented the mad ambition of Xerxes, and the fatal rashness of Mardonius; and who, while they respected their stations and dreaded their power, despised their characters and condemned their conduct.[31] This observation it is proper to make for the honour of human nature. In absolute governments, it is said that men obey, like a flock of sheep, the voice of a despot; yet it may be said with equal truth, that amidst the obedience extorted by fear, they often see and regret the folly of their shepherd.

Skirmishes between the Greeks and the Persian cavalry.

In such nigh neighbourhood, it was scarcely to be expected that the hostile camps should remain without frequent skirmishes. These preludes to the general engagement ended favourably for the Grecians. Three thousand soldiers, furnished by the rocky district of Megara, were posted on the side most exposed to the enemy's cavalry, by whose incursions they had been so much harassed, that they determined to abandon that difficult station. Before executing this design, they sent a herald to the Grecian generals,

[31] Herodot. l. ix. c. 15.

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intimating their resolution, embraced from necessity, and at the same time hinting the injustice of detaining them, from the time of their first encampment, in a post of peculiar danger, which, though they had hitherto indeed maintained it with singular constancy and fortitude, they now found themselves unable longer to defend. Pausanias addressed himself successively to the whole army, to know whether any division was willing to change posts with the Megarians. All were silent, or declined the proposal on frivolous pretences. The Athenians alone, actuated by that love of pre-eminence which they did not more ardently desire than they justly deserved, voluntarily offered their services on this trying occasion. They had not long occupied the important post, when the enemy's cavalry began to assault them. The assault they repelled with vigour, and Masistius the Persian general fell in the action. A terrible conflict ensued, according to ancient custom, around the body of the dead General. The Athenians at length gained possession of it, though they began to give way before more impetuous attacks of the horse, yet upon being supported by a reinforcement from the main body, they again recovered their ground, and compelled the Persians to retire. When messengers arrived in the camp with an account of this defeat and the death of their commander, Mardonius and his attendants burst into tears; their lamentations were soon communicated to the troops, and diffused over the army, whose plaintive cries filled the whole

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land of Bœotia. The Persians tore their hair, disfigured their faces, and displayed every symptom of intolerable woe; for they had lost Masistius, who, in comeliness and stature, was the first of their generals, and in military courage and address only second to Mardonius.[32] CHAP. X.

The Grecians having thus bravely delivered themselves from the incursion of the Persian cavalry, were now exposed to a still greater inconvenience, the scarcity of fresh water, which soon obliged them to decamp. Their late success afforded a favourable moment for executing this dangerous measure. They proceeded in arms along the foot of mount Citheron, ready to repel the attack of the enemy, by converting the column of march into an order of battle. They arrived without opposition at the place appointed. This was a plain near the village of Hysia, in the territory of Platæa, interspersed with many gentle eminences, adorned with a grove and temple sacred to the genius of the place, and enriched by the copious fountain Gargaphia; a necessary resource to the Greeks, as the enemy, by means of their cavalry and archers, commanded both sides of the Æsopus. The Greeks move to Hysia, in the territory of Platæa

It might be expected, that men prepared to defend every thing most dear to them, should have preserved in the field perfect agreement and unanimity; especially as the Greeks, on some occasions at least, seemed sensible that such concord was necessary for the general safety. When the allies on both sides the Dissensions in the allied army,

[32] Herodot. l. ix. c. 224.

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CHAP. X. isthmus had assembled in Attica, they vowed with common consent to the gods, and bound themselves by the most tremendous oaths to maintain with stedfast adherence an unshaken fidelity to Greece, to prefer liberty to life, to obey the command of their leaders, and to bury their companions slain in battle. Should fortune render them victorious (which to their present ardour seemed scarcely a matter of doubt), they swore never to demolish any city whose inhabitants had concurred with the general voice on this important occasion, and never to rebuild the temples defaced by the Barbarians, but to leave them to the most distant posterity, as a monument of sacrilegious rage, and an incitement to honourable revenge. They swore also to institute an annual festival denominated "Common Liberty[33]," and to consecrate public games and sacrifices to the goddess, the great author of their union, and the venerable object of their worship. But these public-spirited sentiments continued not long to actuate them. We have already had occasion to remark several symptoms of approaching animosity. Their dissensions soon broke out into an open rupture, and prevailed, even on the eve of a battle, not only between rival republics, but in the bosom of almost every community.

between the Athenians and Tegeans.

The first contest arose between the Athenians and Tegeans, about the command of the left wing. Both parties yielded the right, as the place of greatest honour, to the Spartans. But the citi-

[33] Herodot l. ix c. 5. et seq.

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zens of Tegea, in number three thousand, had been long deemed the best soldiers in Arcadia; and, in all the conjunct expeditions of the Peloponnesians, they had always obtained, unrivalled, the second honours of the field. These they professed themselves unwilling to relinquish, alleging the heroic exploits of their ancient kings; and asserting, "That the actions of the Athenians, performed either during their royal or democratical government, could not bear a comparison with their own: they appealed on this subject to the Lacedæmonians, in conjunction with whom they had often fought and conquered, and whose decision in their favour they rather claimed than requested." This bold pretension the Athenians repelled, with as much dignity as eloquence. "We know," said they, "that the Greeks are here assembled, not to dispute about precedency, but to fight the Barbarian. Yet, as the Tegeans have mentioned *their* ancestors, it becomes us to maintain the immortal renown of our own. Need we mention their ancient victories over the impious Thebans; their chastisement of the insolent Eurystheus; their generous protection of the unfortunate sons of Hercules? When Greece was invaded by the warlike Amazons, and afterwards by the fiercer savages of Scythia and Thrace, the Athenians resisted and overcame the common enemy. What people fought with more bravery than they in the war of Troy? But perhaps *we*, who now address you, have degenerated from the glory of our ancestors. Let the battle of Marathon

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CHAP. X. efface the foul suspicion. There, unaided and alone, we defended the general safety, maintained the glory of Greece, and raised, by the prowess of our single republic, a trophy over forty nations. This exploit, had we no other to allege, entitles us to the rank claimed by the Tegeans, and to far greater honours. But the present is not a time for such contests; place us, therefore, O Spartans! in whatever station you think fit; there we will behave like brave men." Their words were scarcely ended, when the whole army of the Lacedæmonians cried out with one consent, "That the Athenians were far more worthy than the Tegeans or any nation of Arcadia, to stand at the head of the left wing;" and accordingly they assumed that important post.[34]

The Persians encamp near the enemy.

Meantime the Barbarian army approached. The Medes and Persians encamped on the plain, fronting the Spartans: the Grecian auxiliaries were placed in direct opposition to the Athenians. It is easy to perceive, even at this distance of time, the reason for such an arrangement. The Persians avoided to encounter the Athenian bravery, which they had already fatally experienced in the field of Marathon; and, as the Thebans were the most powerful and the warmest of their foreign allies, as well as the inveterate enemies to Athens, it was thought proper to oppose them to that side on which the Athenians were posted. Ambiguous oracles, attended by unfavourable omens and prophecies,

[34] Herodot. l. ix. c. 26. et seq. Plut. in Aristid.

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had hitherto deterred Mardonius from venturing a general engagement; and he was at length determined to this measure, not from any auspicious[35] change in the admonitions of Heaven, but from the apparent timidity occasioned by the real dissensions of the Greeks. CHAP. X.

The same reasons which made Mardonius desire to preserve, made Pausanius wish to alter, the relative disposition of their respective camps. Except in the glorious contest at Thermopylæ, in which they devoted themselves to death for the safety of their country, the Spartans had never contended with the Medes; but they had often fought and conquered the Bœotians. Pausanius therefore desired (for though dignified with the title of General, he could not command) the Athenians to change places with his countrymen. This request was cheerfully complied with; but other circumstances sowed dissension in the Athenian camp.[36] The quiet likewise of the Lacedæmonians was disturbed by the quarrels between Pausanias and Anompharetus, the Spartan next in command; and, conspiring with these internal animosities, the Persian horse beat up their quarters, intercepted their convoys, and, by an unexpected incursion, destroyed their watering- The Greeks decamp a second time.

[35] The prophets consulted were Greeks, who perhaps secretly served the cause of their country. Mardonius resolved to engage the enemy, as we learn from Herodotus, without regarding their predictions. Alexander of Macedon came in the night to the Grecian camp, to give intimation of that resolution; yet Mardonius seems to have been immediately determined to attack, by the circumstances mentioned in the text.

[36] Plutarch. in Aristid.

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place. It thus became necessary again to decamp. The obscurity of midnight was chosen as the most convenient time for effecting this purpose; and the destined place of retreat was a narrow slip of ground lying towards the source of the Æsopus, and confined between that river and mount Citheron. This post was at least preferred by the majority; for the Greeks were by no means unanimous; so that when the march was ordered, many of the allies abandoned their leaders; others took refuge in the neighbouring temples, to elude the pursuit of the horse; while Anompharetus the Spartan declared, "That neither he, nor the division under his command, should ever fly from the enemy:" and in consequence of its dispersion in so many different directions, the Grecian army presented next morning the appearance, not of a regular march, but of a flight or rout.

Mardonius attacks them.

Mardonius was apprised that the Greeks had changed their order of battle. He was now informed, that they had abandoned their camp. Not doubting that fear had precipitated their retreat, he ordered his soldiers to pursue the fugitives, and to complete the victory. The Lacedæmonians and Athenians were still within his reach; the former near the foot of the mountain, the latter in the middle of the plain. Having sent his Grecian auxiliaries, amounting to fifty thousand, against the Athenians, he advanced with the bravest of the Persian troops towards that portion of the enemy which had shown an anxious solicitude to avoid his arms. Never did the contrast appear greater than

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in the opposite appearance and behaviour of the warring nations on this occasion. The Barbarians, ill-armed, and totally ignorant of discipline, advanced without order and with a loud insulting noise. The Lacedæmonians, carefully covered with their shields, observed in silence the result of their sacrifices. While the heavenly admonitions were unfavourable, they patiently received the darts and javelins which the enemy threw upon them. But as soon as Pausanius, casting his eyes towards a neighbouring temple of Juno, and devoutly entreating the protection of the goddess, had obtained, in the changing aspect of the victims, a propitious answer to his prayer, the Spartans proceeded with intrepidity to close with their opponents.[37] The Persians, reinforced with the Sacæ, a Scythian tribe, sustained the attack with great bravery. Immense numbers were slain; but new numbers succeeded, crowding together in tumultuous disorder, and making an hideous outcry, as if they had intended to tear in pieces and to devour the enemy. Mardonius, mounted on a white steed of uncommon strength and swiftness, was distinguished in every part of the battle by the splendour of his appearance, but still more by deeds of signal valour. He was attended by a thousand horsemen, consisting of the flower of the Persian nobility, all alike ambitious to imitate the example, and to emulate the fame of their leader. Had their skill been equal to their courage, or had they previously bestowed as

The battle of Platæa.

[37] Herodot. l. ix. c. 62. et seq.

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much pains in disciplining their troops as in improving their own agility and address, either the Greeks must have been conquered, or the battle must have remained doubtful. But the Barbarians acted without union or concert; and, as they fought singly, were successively defeated. It is the nature and the greatest disadvantage of cavalry, not to increase in force in proportion to the reduplication of its ranks. The Grecian phalanx, on the other hand, received an accession of strength from every addition to its depth; the ranks behind supported those before; no power was mis-spent or unexerted, and the effect might be continually augmented, till it became irresistible. Availing themselves of this circumstance, the Lacedæmonians thickened their ranks, extended their spears, sustained the shock, and penetrated the depth, of the bravest Persian squadron. Mardonius fell by the fortunate arm of the Spartan Aieimnestus.[88] The death of the general was immediately followed by the defeat of the Persians, and the defeat of the Persians by the flight of the Barbarian army. Artabazus, the Parthian chief, had from the beginning condemned the rash measures of Mardonius. He commanded forty thousand men, who were prepared on every occasion to follow the example of their leader. As soon as he perceived the

Death of Mardonius, and defeat of the Barbarians.

[88] Composed of two Greek words, which may be translated "of immortal memory:" an instance among many that the Greeks frequently gave names characteristic of persons; a custom which likewise prevailed much among the Jews. See Michaelis's Translation and Annotations on Genesis p. 37. et passim.

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confusion of the Persians, he made the signal for his troops to quit the field. He conducted them through the territory of the Phocians, and by a hasty march to the Hellespont, anticipating the news of the defeat and death of Mardonius, returned in safety to the Asiatic coast, with the forces entrusted to his care. [39] CHAP. X.

Defeat of their auxiliaries.

The remainder of the discomfited Barbarians sought refuge in their camp, which, as we have already mentioned, had been strengthened by a considerable fortification. The Spartans pursued them with great ardour, but were unable to force their encampment. The Tegeans and other troops seconded the attack, but no impression could be made on the wall, till the arrival of the Athenians. These generous defenders of the cause of liberty had repulsed the Grecian auxiliaries, who impiously assisted the enemies of their country. The behaviour of the greater part of the traitors furnished the occasion of an easy victory; for, unable to meet the just reproaches and indignant looks of their countrymen, they soon betook themselves to flight, which, in the present case, seemed more honourable than resistance. The Thebans alone opposed with great perseverance the Athenian valour; they did not desist from hostility till several hundreds were slain; and when compelled to quit the field, they fled towards Bœotia, and shut themselves up within the strong walls of their city. Instead of pursuing these fugitives,

[39] Herodot. l. ix. c. 65.

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though their domestic and inveterate foes, the Athenians, with a laudable moderation and prudence, probably inspired by Aristides, then one of their generals, hastened to reinforce the Lacedæmonians, who had already engaged and put to flight the main strength of the enemy. The Athenians, however, came in time to complete the glory of that memorable day. They attacked with redoubled vigour the fortification, which had been in vain assaulted by their allies; and having effected a breach in the wall, entered the Persian camp. They were followed by the brave soldiers of Tegea, and afterwards by the Spartans. The Barbarians were seized with consternation at seeing so many myriads confined within a narrow space. The means of their expected safety became the principal cause of their destruction. Fear hindered them to fight; the wall hindered them to fly; the great number of the enemy made it dangerous for the victors to give quarter; resentment of past injuries prompted them to revenge; of near two hundred thousand Barbarians, not two thousand escaped the fury of the Grecian spear. [40]

The Persians massacred in their camp.

The event of this bloody engagement not only delivered the Greeks from the danger of servitude, but gave them possession of greater wealth than they could ever have expected to possess. In his precipitate retreat from Greece, Xerxes left behind him all his riches and magnificence. His most valuable effects were bestowed on Mardonius, the

The valuable booty found there.

[40] Herodot. l. ix. c. 100.

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flatterer of his inclinations, and the unfortunate minister of his revenge. The rest was divided among his inferior favourites; and, independently of the bounty of the prince, the tents of the Persian nobles furnished a wide profusion of elegance and splendour. Couches magnificently embroidered; tables of gold and silver; bowls and goblets of gold; stalls and mangers of brass, curiously wrought and ornamented; chains, bracelets, scymitars, some of solid gold, others adorned with precious stones; and, to crown all, many chests of Persian money, which began at that time, and continued long afterwards to be current in Greece. In the common mass of spoil, Herodotus reckons a great many Persian women, besides innumerable horses and camels. The whole being collected into one place, the tenth was consecrated to the gods. A tenth of the remainder was bestowed on the general. Peculiar presents were offered to the temples of Olympian Jove, Isthmian Neptune, and Delphian Apollo, the favourite divinities of the whole Grecian name; nor did the Athenians forget to show particular gratitude to their adored Minerva. Prizes were afterwards distributed among the bravest of the surviving warriors; for, though the victory had been obtained with little blood, yet several hundreds had fallen, now lamented as the most generous and daring; among whom were ninety-one Spartans, fifty-two Athenians, and sixteen men of Tegea. Callicratides, a Spartan, the bravest and most beautiful of the Greeks, was slain by an arrow, before Pausanias,

CHAP. X.

How applied.

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who had not yet finished the sacrifice, had given the signal of engagement. As he fell, he said to those around him, that he was contented to die for Greece, but regretted dying ingloriously, having performed nothing worthy of himself, or the common cause. But in the battle itself no combatant behaved with such distinguished bravery as Aristodemus, who alone, of three hundred Spartans, survived the action of Thermopylæ. This circumstance had rendered him contemptible in the eyes of his countrymen. He was continually upbraided with the base desertion of his companions. The most heroic deeds could not restore him to the good opinion of the public, and it was asserted by the Spartans, that even on the present occasion, as he had determined to seek a voluntary death in order to efface the stain of his former infamy, he was not entitled to any of those honours which are deservedly bestowed on the genuine efforts of spontaneous valour. [41]

The confederate Greeks chastise the perfidy of the Thebans.

The Greeks buried their dead with every circumstance of funeral pomp, erected in the field of battle conspicuous trophies of their renown, and appropriated the value of twenty thousand pounds for dedicating temples and statues to the tutelary deities of Platæa, the illustrious scene of victory. A few days were spent in these transactions; after which it was determined, by universal consent, to march into Bœotia, in order to chastise the perfidy of the Thebans. On the eleventh day after the battle, they arrived in the

[41] Herodot. l. ix. c. 70.

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neighbourhood of Thebes, ravaged the territory, and made approaches to the walls. The citizens, who were not all equally guilty or equally obnoxious, escaped general destruction by surrendering the leaders of the faction which abetted the interest of the Medes. The traitors were carried to Corinth, condemned without trial, and sacrificed to the manes of their countrymen who had fallen at Marathon, Salamis, and Platæa, in defence of political liberty and national independence.[42]

Battle of Mycalé in Ionia.

The battle of Platæa happened on the twenty-second of September; and, on the same day, another battle, not less glorious or less decisive, was fought between the same nations at the promontory of Mycalé in Ionia, opposite to the isle of Samos. The shattered remnant of the Persian fleet, which had escaped destruction on the fatal twentieth of October of the preceding year, took refuge in the friendly ports of Asia Minor. The victorious armament had suffered too much in repeated shocks with a superior force, to engage at that late season in the pursuit of an enemy, whose strength, amounting to above four hundred vessels, was still nearly the double of their own. The little squadron of Themistocles, averse to inactivity, found occupation, as we already had occasion to notice, in laying the islands of the Ægæan under contribution. The great body of the fleet rendezvoused in the harbours of Ægina. There the Grecians continued during the winter, and before the season for action approached, the

[42] Herodot. l. ix. c. 85.

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CHAP. X. command was bestowed on Xantippus the Athenian, and on Leotychydes, the Spartan king. To these commanders, whose abilities and influence in their respective republics, we formerly had an opportunity to mention, there arrived early in the spring a secret deputation from several cities of Ionia, entreating that the valour of the European Greeks, which had been so successfully employed in their own defence, might be still farther exerted in delivering from bondage their brethren in Asia. In consequence of this invitation, the fleet sailed eastward, and had scarcely reached the coast of Delos, when a second embassy came from the Samians, proposing the same measures as the first, and farther adding, that the Persian fleet now lying in the harbour of Samos, might be attacked and defeated without danger or difficulty. The Grecians seized with eagerness a favourable opportunity for terminating the war: but, before they arrived at Samos, the enemy suspecting their motions, and unwilling to hazard another engagement at sea, had retired to the Ionic coast, and, according to the custom of that age, not only drawn their ships on shore, but surrounded them with a ditch and pallisade, and even a stone wall of considerable strength. The vessels thus secured, the sailors, amounting to forty thousand, commanded by Artayndes, formed a camp along the shore. They were reinforced by the Persian army under Tigranes, computed at sixty thousand. It appears not whether this powerful body of men made any attempt to disturb the landing of the Greeks, who at the highest compu-

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tation could not amount to a fourth part of their number. It seems most probable that they disdained this measure, and though they acknowledged their inferiority at sea, determined to hazard at land a general engagement, in which the isles and Hellespont, as well as the flourishing cities of the Asiatic coast, should form the important prize of victory.

The Greeks victorious.

The Greeks did not decline the battle. Xantippus is said to have made use of a similar contrivance with that employed by Themistocles at Artemisium, for depriving the enemy of their Grecian auxiliaries.[43] A more probable stratagem is ascribed to Leotychides, who, in order to encourage his troops, is said to have industriously spread a report that their countrymen had obtained a signal victory at Platæa. This report, by whatever means[44] it was raised and circulated, had doubtless a considerable effect in deciding the fortune of the day. Other circumstances, not less powerful, were the general revolt of the Asiatic Greeks, and the silent contest of honour between the Spartans and Athenians. Among the Barbarian troops, the Persians behaved with uncommon bravery; and, on the side of the

[43] The story is improbable, because the Asiatic Greeks had already declared their intention to revolt. It was not the interest of Xantippus, therefore, to make the Persians suspect their fidelity, since treacherous friends are always more dangerous than open enemies.

[44] Herodotus (l. ix. c. 100.) and Diodorus (l. xi. c. 35.) differ in their accounts.

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Grecians, the battle of Mycalé was more bloody than any other fought in the course of the war. It deserves attention, that in all these memorable actions, the Greeks had no resource but in victory. But the Barbarians had provided probable means of safety, even in case of a defeat. On the present occasion they had endeavoured, not only to secure a retreat within a strongly fortified camp, but to acquire an undisturbed passage through the narrow defiles of Mycalé. Yet all their precautions were ineffectual against the valour and fortune of the Greeks. The Milesians, posted by the enemy to guard the passes of the mountains, prevented, instead of promoting, their escape. The Spartans pursued them with great slaughter in that direction; while the Athenians, assisted by the allies of Corinth, Sicyon, and Trœzené, advanced with undaunted bravery to attack their camp. The Asiatic Greeks, who at all times acknowledged the warlike pre-eminence of their European brethren, emulated, in the present engagement alone, in which they fought for every thing dear to them, the admired valour of their ancestors. Above forty thousand Persians perished in the field; many fell in the pursuit, or in defending their entrenchments: the remainder fled in disorder, nor thought themselves secure till they had reached the walls of Sardes. Their ships, their camp, the freedom of Ionia, and the undisturbed possession of the Asiatic coast, formed the inestimable prize of

Conclusion and consequences of the Persian invasion.

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the victors; and thus the expedition of Xerxes, undertaken with a view to enslave Europe, restored liberty to the fairest portion of Asia.[45] CHAP. X.

[45] Herodot. l. ix. c. 90. — c. 114. Diodorus Siculus, l. xi. c. 34. — c. 38.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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THE

HISTORY

OF

ANCIENT GREECE,

ITS COLONIES, AND CONQUESTS;

Part the First;

FROM THE EARLIEST ACCOUNTS

TILL THE

DIVISION OF THE MACEDONIAN EMPIRE

IN THE EAST;

INCLUDING THE HISTORY OF

LITERATURE, PHILOSOPHY, AND THE FINE ARTS.

By JOHN GILLIES, LL.D.

F.R.S. AND S.A. LONDON, F.R.S. EDINBURGH, INSTIT. SOC. PARIS, AND
ACADEM. REGIÆ SCIENC. GOTTING. CORRESP.
AND HISTORIOGRAPHER TO HIS MAJESTY FOR SCOTLAND.

Εκ μεν τοινυν της απαντων προς αλληλα συμπλοκης και παραβεσεως, ετι δε ομοιοτητος και διαφορας, μοιως τις αν εφικοιτο, και δυνηθειη κατοπτευσας, αμα και το χρησιμον και το τερπνον εκ της ιστοριας λαβειν. POLYBIUS, l. i. c. v.

THE SIXTH EDITION.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL AND W. DAVIES,

IN THE STRAND.

1820.

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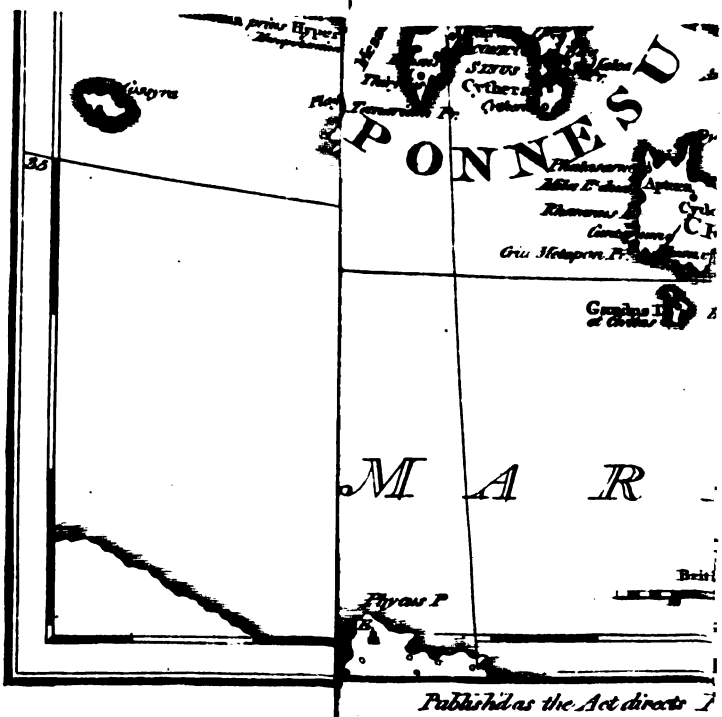
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THE

HISTORY

OF

ANCIENT GREECE.

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CHAP. XI.

State of Greece. Olymp. lxxv. 1. A. C. 480.

THE beginning of the fifth century before Christ forms the most glorious æra in the history of Greece. While the republics of Athens and Sparta humbled the pride of Asia, the flourishing settlements on the Hellespont and the Hadriatic overawed the fierce Barbarians of

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Europe [1]; and the southern colony of Cyrené restrained within their native limits, the savage ferocity of the Lybians. [2] The north, south, and east thus acknowledging the ascendant of the Grecian valour and genius, Rome still contended in the west, with the obstinacy of the Volsci [3], for the rude villages of Latium: yet on this side, from which the stream of conquest was destined, in a future age, to flow over the world, the Greeks had already most danger to apprehend, and most laurels to acquire; not however from Rome, but from the implacable [4] enemy of the Roman name.

The foundation and growth of Carthage,

The foundation and growth of Carthage, which have been so successfully adorned by poetical fiction, are very imperfectly explained in history. It is known, that at least eight hundred and ninety years [5] before the Christian æra, a Phœnician colony settled on that fertile projecture of the African coast, which boldly advances into the Mediterranean, to meet, as it were, and to defy the shores of Sicily and Italy, planted in the following century by Greeks, with whom the republic

[1] Herodot. l. vi. Thucydid. l. i.

[2] Strabo, l. xvii. [3] Diodor. l. xi.

[4] With what energy does Virgil express the eternal enmity between Rome and Carthage!

Littora littoribus contraria, fluctibus undas,
Imprecor, arma armis; pugnent ipsique nepotes. Æneid. l. iv.

[5] B. C. 891. Petav. de Doctr. Temporum. Yet, as there is a gap in the Carthaginian history of several centuries, every man of taste will be desirous of extending the duration of this dark and unknown period, to have the pleasure of believing that Æneas and Dido were contemporaries: an opinion more probable than that of Sir Isaac Newton, who would bring down the time of Æneas and the æra of the Trojan war to the age of Dido and the foundation of Carthage.

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of Carthage, long before the age of her great Hannibal, waged many cruel and bloody wars. For three centuries after their establishment, the Carthaginians seem to have silently, but successfully, availed themselves of the natural fertility of their soil, the conveniency of their harbours, the skill and dexterity of their artisans, the adventurous spirit of their mariners; above all, of the profound wisdom of their government, which had been established on such admirable principles, that from the foundation of their city till the age of the philosopher Aristotle [6], no tyrant had oppressed the freedom, no sedition had disturbed the tranquillity of Carthage. [7]

which opposes the naval enterprises of the Greeks.

From this peaceful and happy obscurity the Carthaginians first emerged into notice in consequence of their opposition to the naval enterprises of the Asiatic Greeks, who, about the middle of the sixth century before Christ, flying the oppressive domination of Persia, threw themselves on the western shores and islands of the Mediterranean. As a maritime and enterprising nation, the Greeks were naturally rivals to the Carthaginians; and the Phocæans, who had left the coast of Ionia to avoid the cruel tyranny of the satrap Harpagus, had landed at, or perhaps

[6] Aristot. de Repub. l. ii. c. xi.

[7] If Dido laid the foundation of so much prosperity and happiness, she might boast, with becoming dignity, of having secured immortal fame:

Vixi, et quem dederat cursum fortuna peregi,
Urbem præclaram statui, mea mœnia vidi:
Et nunc magna mei sub terris ibit imago. VIRGIL, ibid.

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founded, Aleria in the isle of Corsica, before they finally settled at Velia [8] in Italy, and Marseilles in Gaul. [9] The Carthaginians, who had already formed establishments in Corsica, regarded the whole island as a dependency of their republic, and set themselves to oppose with vigour the Græcian invaders. Their commercial allies [10], the Tuscans, reinforced their fleet; and the most ancient naval engagement, distinctly recorded in history, was fought in the Sardinian sea, between the Phocæans with sixty sail on the one side, against the Tuscans and Carthaginians with double that number on the other. [11] The Greeks had the whole glory of the battle; they destroyed forty of the enemy's ships, and compelled the rest to fly. But the smallness of their numbers, greatly diminished by their desperate efforts in defending the honour of their nation against a superior force, obliged them to abandon the project of settling in Corsica.

Hinders them from settling in Corsica.

Power and splendour of Carthage. Olymp. lxx. 1. A. C. 509.

Though the issue of this memorable sea-fight tends to dispel the cloud of fiction concerning the remote voyages and ancient naval power of the Carthaginians, yet it cannot be doubted, that in the beginning of the following century, and before the invasion of Xerxes, they were the most powerful commercial nation in the world. The proud centre of their empire was surrounded by a cluster of colonies and tributary cities, which extended

[8] Diodor. l. v. and Cluverius Sicil. Ant. p. 507.
[9] Thucydid. l. i.
[10] Aristot. Politic. l. iii.
[11] Id. ibid. & Herodot. l. vi.

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above a thousand miles[11] along the coast of Africa. They were masters of Sardinia and the northern coast of Sicily.[12] They had established colonies not only in Corsica, but in Malta and the Balearian isles. They often visited the Casseterides.[13] They probably first discovered the Canaries, whose equable and happy temperature entitled them to the epithet of Fortunate. They had appropriated the gold mines of Spain, the Peru and Mexico of the ancient world[14]; and all these advantages being directed by the prudent enterprise of the magistrates, consisting chiefly of merchants[15], and improved by the patient industry of the people, who knew that by gaining

[11] From the western boundary of Cyrenaica to the Straits of Gibraltar, Shaw reckons 1420 geographical miles; but this was the extent of the Carthaginian dominion in the greatest splendour of the republic. Shaw's Travels, p. 150.

[12] Polyb. l. iii. c. 22.

[13] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. vi. c. 37.

[14] Auctor. apud Hendreich Respub. Carthag. l. i.

[15] In this respect the government of Carthage was very different from that of Crete, and particularly of Sparta, with both which Aristotle compares it. Isocrates (ad Nicoclem) says, that in cival affairs the Carthaginian government was aristocratical; in military, royal: this probably was the case in the earliest times. The chief magistrates were called Suffetes, which, in the Hebrew language, signifies judges (Bochart, Cannan), and might therefore be naturally translated by the word βασιλεις, in Greek. But it appears from Aristotle, that these judges or kings, two in number, were nothing more than annual magistrates, who convoked the senate, and presided in that assembly. When the senate and the suffetes were of one mind, the people had no vote in the management of public affairs; but when their opinions differed, it belonged to the people to decide. Aristotle regards this as an imperfection in their constitution; and time justified his opinion. In a commercial republic, where the people gradually become more rich and more licentious, such a regulation naturally tended to throw too much power into their

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wealth they must attain respect, rendered Carthage the centre of general commerce. From Egypt they imported linen and the papyrus; the coasts of the Red Sea furnished them with spices, perfumes, gold, pearls, and precious stones.[16] The rich carpets of Persia adorned the palaces of the Carthaginian magistrates. From Spain they drew the precious metals necessary to facilitate their commerce; and from Britain and other provinces of the north, they derived iron, lead, tin, and copper, equally necessary to second all the efforts of their industry. The Carthaginian exports consisted partly in the produce of their fertile soil, but chiefly in the ingenious labours of their artificers; grains, fruits, honey, leather, and flax of a superior kind[17]; naval stores, particularly ropes made of a species of broom called spartum; household furniture, toys, and the materials of the highly valued *Punicean* colour. Their mechanic arts had attained a degree of perfection which was acknowledged and admired by their enemies[18]; but the liberal arts, and particularly poetry and eloquence[19], seem never to

hands. During the century which elapsed from Aristotle to Hannibal, the people of Carthage became more powerful than the senate; at Rome the senate continued more powerful than the people; and to these circumstances chiefly, the most judicious author of antiquity ascribes the very different fortune of the two nations in the ever memorable wars between them. Polyb. l. vi.

[16] Pliny, l. xxxviii. c. 7. tells us that carbuncles were so common in Carthage, that they were generally distinguished by the epithet, Carthaginian. [17] Xenophon, de Venatione.

[18] Cato de Re Rustica, & Valerius Maximus, l. vii.

[19] The great Hannibal was a lover of Greek learning, and composed several books in that language. Cornelius Nepos in Hannibal. Silenus, another Carthaginian, wrote history in Greek. Cicer. de

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have flourished or taken root in their republic; a circumstance more fatal to the renown of Carthage than all the destructive ravages of the Romans, whose immortal hate would have found it more difficult to abolish the elegant productions of genius, than to extinguish the most splendid monuments of wealth and grandeur.

The ambitious and jealous spirit of that republic.

Few individuals are able to enjoy, without abusing, the gifts of fortune; and no nation ever possessed power, without aspiring at conquest. But the commercial ambition of the Carthaginians was degraded by an exclusive and jealous spirit, which sought to stifle the activity and improvements of every people that might ever become their rival.[20] In the end of the sixth century before Christ, and twenty-eight years before the invasion of Xerxes, they concluded a treaty with Rome, recently delivered from the tyranny of its kings, which marks the utmost solicitude to prevent the new republic from ever entering into correspondence, or ever gaining acquaintance[21],

Divinat. Sallust speaks of *Punic books* in his history of the Jugurthine war; and we know that Mago's Treatise of Rural Oeconomy, in 28 books, was translated by order of the Roman senate, although the elder Cato had previously treated that important subject. I mention not the doubtful voyage of Hanno, (see Dodwell, Dissert. in Hannon. Perip. Montesq. Esprit des Loix, l. xxi. c. 8. & Bougainville, Mem. de l'Acad. t. xxvi.) since better proofs of the Carthaginian literature may be found in the second and eighteenth books of Pliny. But two observations naturally present themselves which justify what is said in the text; first, that the Carthaginians wrote rather on the useful than ornamental arts; and secondly, that their greatest writers preferred the Greek to the Punic language.

[20] Strabo, l. iii. p. 265. & l. xviii. p. 1154.

[21] Polyb. l. iii. c. 22.

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The prosperity of Greece alarms the Carthaginians,

with the dependencies of Carthage. The Greek colonies in Italy and Sicily, which, within the course of sixty years, had (for reasons that will immediately be explained) received such accessions of strength and splendour as entitled those countries to the appellation of Magna Græcia[22], more justly alarmed the jealousy, and provoked the envious resentment of the Carthaginian magistrates. The Greeks were already masters of the eastern isles and shores of the Mediterranean. They were not only a warlike, but an ingenious and commercial nation. The naval force of the Phocæans alone had defied and disgraced the united fleets of the Tuscans and Carthaginians. The latter therefore beheld, with the utmost satisfaction, the continual sparks of hostility that flashed between the Greeks and Persians. They learned, with admiration and delight, the mighty preparations of Xerxes; but were still more delighted when the great King, who had been accustomed to receive the presents and the adulation of the tributary princes of Asia, condescended to demand an equal alliance with their republic; probably granted them subsidies to raise troops in Spain, Gaul, and the northern parts of Italy; and only required them to join their efforts with his own, to punish, and, if possible, to extirpate the natural enemies of both. The crafty Africans greedily accepted propositions, seemingly so favourable to their interest; and, after three years' preparations, had collected an armament of two thousand

who enter into an alliance with Xerxes.

[22] Strabo, l. viii. p. 389.

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ships of war, and three thousand transports, to convey an army of three hundred thousand men into Magna Græcia.[23] It was determined between the confederates, that while Xerxes poured his millions into the centre of Greece, and rooted out the original stock of the devoted nation, the Carthaginians should cut off its flourishing branches in Italy and Sicily. The terms of the agreement were carefully observed; the combined attack was made at the time appointed; and Europe is interested in knowing to what particular causes must be ascribed the failure of expeditions, which, if successful, would have inverted her destiny, and intercepted that boasted superiority which she thenceforth maintained over the other quarters of the world.

Their views in adopting this measure.

Whoever has observed the desolate barbarity of Calabria, or reflected on the narrow extent and present weakness of Sicily, cannot hear, without a mixture of surprise and incredulity, that five centuries before Christ, those countries contained above twenty warlike communities, several of whom could send into the field an hundred thousand fighting men. The hasty glance of impatient ignorance will confidently reject, on this subject, the evidence of antiquity, as contrary to probability and experience; the contemplative visionary will admit the fact, and deduce from it many gloomy reflections on the old age and decay of the world; but the more practical philosopher will attempt to discover the causes of the ancient and actual state of Magna Græcia, in

The flourishing condition of Magna Græcia.

[23] Herodot. l. vii. & Diodor. l. xi.

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the history and institutions of that country during the respective periods of time which are the objects of his research.

History of the colonization of that country.

The establishment of Eubœan Cumæ, the mother of Parthenopé, or Naples, and the foundation of a few other Grecian cities in Italy and Sicily, remounts, as already mentioned, to the heroic ages; but by far the greater number of Greek colonies in those parts were planted during the eighth century before the Christian æra [24], and chiefly, 1. by the Eubœans, whose principal city, Chalcis, usually furnishing the conductor of the colony, gave the epithet of Chalcidian to the new settlement; 2. by the Achæans of Peloponnesus, who were of the Eolian tongue and lineage; and, 3. by the Dorian states of that peninsula, especially Corinth; to which city may be applied the observation of ancient republicans concerning the fathers of Cato and Brutus, that as children often derived lustre from the merit of their parents, so Corinth acquired renown from the splendour and prosperity of its children.

The Dorian colonies most powerful in Sicily. Olymp. xi. 2. A. C. 729.

Besides their powerful colonies in Corcyra, Leucas, Anactorium, Ambracia, whose transactions form such an important part of the history of ancient Greece, the Corinthians founded Syracuse, which soon became, and long continued, the capital of Sicily. Seventy years after their establishment there, the inhabitants of Syracuse built Acras, and afterwards, at an equal distance of time, Camerina. Many other cities of less

[24] Between the 10th and 30th Olympiads, and the years 777 and 737 B. C.

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note owed existence to the same metropolis; so that in the sixth century before Christ, the Syracusans had extended their settlements over all the southern coast of the island. [25] We had already an opportunity to mention on what occasion the Lacedæmonians founded the city of Tarentum in Italy; thirty-nine years afterwards, Rhegium was built by the Messenians and Chalcidians, the former of whom (as we have related above) had already settled at Messené, on the opposite shore of Sicily. The citizens of Tarentum founded Heraclea, situated on the Tarentine gulph, and perhaps gave an accession of inhabitants to Locri, which, though originally planted by the Eolians, seems early to have used the Doric dialect. The Rhodians, who were also of the Doric race, built the city of Gela in Sicily, forty-five years after the foundation of Syracuse [26]; and Gela planted the flourishing colony of Agrigentum, which soon surpassed the splendour of its metropolis, and became the second city in the island.

Olymp. viii. 2. A. C. 707.

Olymp. xlix. 3. A. C. 582.

By means of these powerful establishments, the *Dorians* acquired, and always maintained, an ascendant in Sicily; but the Achæan colonies, who were of the *Eolian* blood and language [27], commanded the Italian shore. Crotona, the most considerable city of the Achæans, and of all Italy, in ancient times, was built seven hundred and ten years before Christ. [28] Sybaris, its

The Eolian, in Italy.

[25] Scymnus. v. 293. Thucydid. l. vi. & Herodot. l. vii.

[26] Thucydid. l. vi.

[27] Strabo, l. viii. p. 513. assures us of the latter circumstance, which is of more importance than the uncertain genealogy of the ancient Grecian tribes.

[28] Dionys. Halicarn. l. ii.

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rival, was founded about the same time, and by the same nation. The former sent colonies to Tirina, Caulonia, and Pandosia; the latter built Laus, Metapontum, and Posidonia, or Pæstum [29], whose admired ruins attest the ancient wealth and grandeur of the Greek cities of Italy.

The Ionian the weakest in both countries.

In this deduction, had we followed the order of time, we ought to have mentioned, first of all, the Ionian colonies, who came from the isle of Eubœa. The inhabitants of that island built Naxus in Sicily, a year before the foundation of Syracuse [30]; but neither that nor their settlements at Catana, Segesta, Leontium, ever attained considerable populousness or splendour. And it deserves to be particularly remarked, that, for reasons which will appear in the sequel of this work, the Ionians, who settled chiefly upon the eastern shore of Sicily, never rivalled the power and fame of their Dorian and Eolian neighbours, but fell short of those nations in Magna Græcia, as much as they surpassed them on the shores and islands of Asia.

General causes of the wealth and populousness of all these colonies.

Instead of fatiguing the memory of our readers with the names of less considerable states or cities, which had little influence on the general affairs of the whole country [31], it is of more importance to

[29] Scymnus. v. 245. [30] Thucyd. l. vi.

[31] The Magna Græcia, which I always use in the sense of Strabo, cited above, to denote the Greek settlements in Sicily as well as Italy, being the most accessible part of the Grecian dominions, has been more fully described by the moderns than any other. The immense collection of the Thesaurus Siculus, and particularly vols. i. iv. vii. viii. and xiii. afford useful materials, as well as Cluverii Sicil. Antiqua, and Fazellus de Rebus Siculis, and the excellent work of Gio.

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Olymp. lxx. 1. A. C. 500.

examine the circumstances to which the inhabitants of Magna Græcia owed their flourishing situation at the period of time of which we write, when (it may be boldly affirmed) these colonies equalled, and surpassed, the wealth and power of the mother-country. We shall not insist on the well-known physical and moral causes which usually contribute to the rapid growth of newly-established colonies. It is evident, that amidst the equality of fortune, and simplicity of manners, which commonly prevail in such communities, men who have a wide country before them must naturally multiply far beyond the proportion of nations corrupted and weakened by the vices of wealth, luxury, and above all, of vanity, which perhaps is the greatest enemy to the increase of the human species. It is sufficient barely to mention the natural fertility of Magna Græcia, and particularly of Sicily, which, in the language of antiquity, restored an hundred fold.[32] The Greeks who sailed thither from Peloponnesus, carried with them the knowledge and practice of agriculture, which had early attained an high degree of perfection in their peninsula; and the exuberant soil of Sicily, improved by cultivation, soon exhibited a picture of that rich abundance, which, in later times, made that beautiful island be entitled the granary of Rome.[33]

Particular causes. The Achæan laws.

The peculiar situation of the Achæans and Dorians, from whom, chiefly, the colonies in

Balt. Caruso, Memorie istoriche di quanto é accaduto in Sicilia dal tempo dé suoi primi habitanti fino ai Normanni.

[32] Strabo, l. viii. [33] Diodorus, l. xvi.

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CHAP. XI. Magna Græcia derived their origin, had a considerable influence in accelerating the population and grandeur of these new establishments. The Achæans, whose republic became so famous in later times, and that through circumstances and causes which it is necessary at present to explain, originally inhabited a long but narrow strip of ground, not more fertile than extensive, along the Corinthian gulph, whose rocky shores were destitute of good harbours. [34] But the impartial and generous spirit of the Achæan laws early compensated the natural defects of their territory. They were the first and long the only republic of Greece, who admitted strangers into their community on equal terms with the ancient citizens. [35] In *their* truly free country, no powerful capital, like Thebes in Bœotia, or Athens in Attica, domineered over the inferior towns and villages. Twelve cities, which had common laws and institutions, and afterwards common weights and measures [36], sent deputies to Helicé, which is distinguished by Homer [37] as the most considerable town of Achaia. That place being destroyed by an earthquake [38] three hundred and seventy-three years before Christ, Ægæ became the seat of the general congress, which regulated public affairs, and appointed annual magistrates and ge-

[34] Plutarch, in Arato, p. 1031. [35] Polybius, l. ii. p. 178.

[36] Polybius, ibid. mentions this circumstance, to shew how desirous they were to have every thing common and equal among them.

[37] Il. ii. in the catalogue.

[38] Strabo, l. viii. p. 589. says, the earthquake happened two years before the battle of Leuctra, which was fought 371 years before Christ.

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nerals to execute their resolutions, who were responsible to the congress, or council, as the members of the council themselves were accountable to the cities by which they had been named and constituted.[39] This excellent system of government, which checked the ambition, while it maintained the independence of Achaia[40], defended that fortunate country against the convulsions which shook and overwhelmed the most powerful republics of Greece. It was then that the Achæans, who during many ages had enjoyed their equitable laws in silence, emerged from obscurity; and communicating their government on equal terms to the neighbouring cities of Peloponnesus, preserved the feeble spark of liberty, every where extinguished around them, for one hundred and thirty-six years, till they finally yielded to the power and policy of Rome.[41] This short period of war and tumult has been minutely described in history, while the many happy centuries that preceded it are but occasionally glanced at by ancient writers: and were it not for the defeats and calamities which the Achæans suffered in later times, we should, perhaps, be ignorant that their ancestors anciently enjoyed an equitable and generous policy, which, being transported with them into Magna Græcia, could not fail to promote the happiness and prosperity of that delightful country.[42]

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A. C. 282.

A. C. 146.

[39] Polybius, l. ii. p. 178.

[40] Schook. Achaia, apud Gronov. Thes. t. v.

[41] Polyb. Excerp. Legat. & Titus Livius, l. xxxviii. & xxxix.

[42] Xenophon, in his Greek history, speaks of the excellence of the Achæan laws, in treating a passage of history which will be re-

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The state of the Dorians at the time of their emigration to Magna Græcia.

The condition of the Dorians, at the time when they planted colonies in Italy and Sicily, is not less worthy of remark. The Dorian states of Peloponnesus were then universally subject to the gentle government of limited but hereditary princes, or to magistrates chosen from the descendants of the ancient royal families [43], and who, thus adorned by birth, were sometimes still more ennobled by wisdom and virtue. [44] It is the nature of colonies to observe with affectionate respect the institutions of their mother-country, which often improve by transplantation, and thrive and flourish in foreign lands, when they have withered and perished in the soil which originally produced and propagated them. Time and accident, and the various causes which have been explained in the course of this history, tended to change the ancient constitution, and to diminish the strength of the Grecian states on both sides the Corinthian Isthmus. While fierce and frequent wars exhausted their population, the exclusive spirit of republican jealousy, which sternly refused strangers any participation in their government, or any protection from their

Circumstances favourable to the new settlers in that country.

lated in the sequel. Polybius was evidently engaged to enter deeply into this subject, through the reason assigned in the text.

[43] These were properly the only nobility in Greece; they were called *ευπατριδαι*, and long held sway in all the Grecian states. S. Petitus has collected the most important passages concerning them in his commentary on the ancient Athenian law, "Τους Ευπατριδας γνωσκειν τα θεια, και παρεχειν αρχοντας, και νομων διδασκαλους ειναι, και δσιων και ιερων εξηγητας." "That the Eupatridæ, or nobility, administer the rites of religion, fill the offices of magistracy, interpret the laws, and explain all sacred and divine matters."

[44] Thucydid. l. i.

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laws, naturally repressed their vigour and stunted their growth. The colonies in Magna Græcia, enjoying a wide territory before them, had not the same interference of interest, and found sufficient employment in subduing the original inhabitants of that country, without commencing hostilities against each other. Nor were they more ambitious to subdue the barbarous natives, than solicitous to incorporate them into their own communities. The kings, or nobility, of Magna Græcia, secure of their own pre-eminence, felt[43] nothing of the republican jealousies which prevailed in the mother-country. They received with pleasure new citizens, or rather subjects, from whatever quarter they might come. The Barbarians adopted the language and manners of the nation to whom they were associated; their children received a Grecian education; and the states of Italy and Sicily thus increasing by degrees, could soon boast, the former of Crotona, Tarentum, Sybaris, Rhegium; the latter of Syracuse, Agrigentum, Messené, Himera, and several other cities, which rivalled or surpassed the wealth of Athens or Corinth, and the populousness of Thebes, Argos, or Sparta.

The oppression of the Asiatic Greeks brought new inhabitants to

The wars, conquests, or oppressions, but above all, the civil dissensions, which in the sixth century before Christ disturbed and deformed the coast of Ionia, and the other Grecian colonies in the islands and continent of Asia, brought

[43] The same policy was practised by Macedon; and, as we shall have occasion to show, was the primary cause of the Macedonian greatness.

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Italy and Sicily;

frequent accessions of inhabitants to the shores of Magna Græcia. In that age the Asiatic Greeks had attained greater proficiency, both in the useful and in the agreeable arts, than any other portion of the Grecian name; but they had also sunk deeper in voluptuousness and luxury. Their poetry, which still remains, alike attests the refinement of their taste, and the corruption of their morals. The effeminate vices, for which the Ionians were thenceforth in all ages infamous [44], seem to have taken deep root in that century; and it is probable, that along with their poetry, music, and painting, they communicated also their dissolute manners and artificial appetites to the Greeks of Italy and Sicily.

who improved arts, and corrupted manners;

But whether this be admitted, or whether we suppose that, according to the ordinary course of events, the inhabitants of Magna Græcia having attained opulence by industry, were stimulated by riches to licence; it is acknowledged by all writers on this part of history, that the Greek cities of Italy, and particularly Sybaris and Crotona, had degenerated from their ancient maxims, and fallen a prey to the most dangerous errors and vices, when Pythagoras came to their relief, about five hundred and fifty years before the Christian æra.

which are reformed by Pythagoras.

The philosophy of Pythagoras forms an important object in the history of the human mind:

[44] Motus doceri gaudet *Ionicos*
Matura virgo, et fingitur artibus,
Jam nunc, et incestos amores
De tenero meditatur ungue. HORACE.

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and if we admit the concurring testimony of ancient authors[45], the philosophy, or rather the legislation, of this extraordinary man, reformed and improved the institutions and policy of Magna Græcia, and contributed in an eminent degree, not only to the quiet and happiness, but to the industry, power, and splendour, of that celebrated country. Lest this influence should appear too great, and even incredible, in a stranger who is known to have studiously declined all public offices and authority, the occasion requires that we should explain the means by which such extraordinary effects were produced.

History of that philosopher. Olymp. xlv. 1. A. C. 600.

Pythagoras was born at Samos[46], when Samos was the richest and most flourishing of all the Grecian isles. His father, Mnesarchus, being a person of distinction in his country[47], the promising youth was carefully instructed in the learning known or valued in that early age.

His education.

Music, poetry, and the gymnastic exercises, formed the principal part of his education; but the young philosopher, if we may anticipate that

[45] Particularly Aristoxenus, the learned disciple of Aristotle (apud Stobæum, Serm. xli.); various ancient authors cited by Jamblichus and Porphyry, as well as by Diogenes Laertius, l. viii.; to which add Justin, l. xx. and Cicero, Tusc. Quæst. de Amicitia, et de Oratore. "Pythagoras exornavit eam Græciam quæ Magna dicta est, et privatim et publice, præstantissimis et institutis et artibus." Cicero de Amicitia.

[46] Isocrates in Busiri. Titus Livius, l. i. c. 18. Lucian. Lexiphanes. To these authorities we may add, that Pythagoras is represented on several Samian Coins. Fabric. Bibl. Græca, t. i. p. 455.

[47] Mnesarchus was sent from Samos to consult the oracle of Delphi, probably on some public occasion. Jam. in Vit. Pythag.

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name, was not[48] indifferent to the discoveries of Thales, the first Grecian who nearly calculated an eclipse of the sun; and he early set himself to rival the Milesian sage in his favourite studies. It is recorded, that he learned eloquence from Pherecydes of Syros[49], who resided a considerable time in the isle of Samos, and who is famous in the literary history of Greece, as the first author in prose.[50] Pittacus of Lesbos, Bias of Priené, and the other sophists, or wise men, (as they were emphatically styled by their contemporaries,) who then flourished in Asiatic Greece, and whose abilities and virtue had raised them, in troubled times, to the head of the several communities of which they were respectively members, excited the kindred ambition of Pythagoras, who appears to have been early animated with the desire of acquiring just renown, by promoting public happiness. In his eighteenth year he visited the continent of Greece, and gained the prize of wrestling at the Olympic games[51], where his vigour, address, and beauty, were beheld with admiration by the multitude; while the opening virtues of his mind were still more admired by men of sense and discernment. In conformity with the practice of an age when the feeble rays of knowledge were scattered over a wide surface, and much pains were requisite to collect them, he withdrew himself from the applauses of his countrymen, and for a longer

Travels.

[48] Apollon. apud Jamblichum.
[49] Diogenes apud Porph.
[50] Plin. N. H. l. vii. c. 56.
[51] Jambl. Porph. &c.

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time than was usual with the Grecian travellers. This circumstance gave occasion to many fables concerning the extent and variety of his voyages.[52] But it is certain that he resided

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[52] The travels of the Greek philosopher were spoken of in vague terms, and magnified even by great writers. *Ultimas* terras lustrasse Pythagoram, Democritum, Platonem accepimus. Cicero de Finibus, l. iv. c. 19. We may well believe, then, that such men as Hermippus (apud Joseph. advers. Apionem), Apollonius, Jamblichus, &c. would carry their exaggerations to the highest degree of extravagance on this fertile subject. The chief source of these fables, and of the supposed learning of the Magi, Chaldæans, Indians, &c. may be found in the credulous or lying writers who accompanied Alexander in his eastern expedition. At their return to Greece, they magnified the learning, as well as the power and wealth, of the nations conquered by their patron; they were solicitous to persuade their countrymen, that their ancestors had learned their philosophy from people whose names they had never before heard; and their own vanity was flattered by having visited, and familiarly known those fancied instructors of mankind. Clearchus, Onesicritus, and Callisthenes, were the most celebrated of these writers, of whom Diogenes Laertius, or rather a far superior man whom he cites, says, Λανθανουσι δε αυτους τα των Ελληνων καταρθωματα Βαρβαροις προσαπτοντες. "They are mistaken when they refer the Grecian discoveries to the Barbarians." It was natural for the eastern nations, when they had adopted the language and learning of the Greeks, to avail themselves of Grecian authorities, to prove how much that celebrated nation owed to people whom they proudly denominated Barbarians. Hence the fables of Berosus the Chaldæan, of Manetho the Egyptian, of Sanchonithon the Phœnician. We except from this class of fabulists the Jew, Josephus, the antiquity of whose nation rests on evidence which it would be irreverent to name in such company. Had Pythagoras or Thales been acquainted with the Jewish religion, they would have learned far nobler notions of the Deity, than those which it appears they entertained. Anaxagoras, surnamed ὁ νους, the præceptor of the great Pericles, was the first Grecian philosopher who saw, by the light of reason, the natural and moral attributes of God, so sublimely described in the Psalms of David. Yet it never was said that Anaxagoras had seen the Psalms, the Books of Moses, or any part of the sacred writings; and it may be remarked, that Josephus himself, in his first book (cont. Appion.), however zealous to prove, that the

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CHAP. XI. several years in the ancient kingdom of Egypt [53], which had been long familiarly known to the Grecian mariners, and where the son of Mnesarchus might probably enjoy the protection of many hereditary friends. In that country he probably made some additions to his knowledge in arithmetic and geometry; he certainly learned many traditions concerning the gods, and the human soul; but what particularly deserved his

Greeks derived their knowledge from the East, can cite no author in favour of this opinion, who lived before the age of Alexander.

[53] There is a famous passage in Isocrates's panegyric of Busiris, which might seem to contradict what is said in the preceding note, if we did not reflect, that the rules of panegyric require not always a strict adherence to historical truth. In speaking of the ancient wisdom and piety of the Egyptians, and particularly of the sacerdotal order, he says, that he himself is not the first who perceived and acknowledged their merit; that many philosophers had done this before him, and particularly Pythagoras the Samian. 'Ος αφικομενος εις Αιγυπτον, και μαθητης εκεινων γενομενος, την τε αλλην φιλοσοφιαν πρωτος εις τους Ελληνας εκομισε, και τα περι τας θυσιας τε και τας αγιστειας τας εν τοις ἱεροις επιφανεστερον των αλλων εσκοπουδασεν· ηγουμενος, ει και μηδεν αυτῳ δια ταυτα πλειον γιγνοιτο παρα των θεων, αλλα παρα γε τοις ανθρωποις εκ τουτων μαλιστα αν ευδοκιμησειν· ὁπερ αυτῳ και συνεβη. Τοσουτον γαρ ευδοξια τους αλλους ἁπαντας υπερβαλεν, ὡστε και τους νεωτερους ἁπαντας επιθυμειν αυτου μαθητας ειναι, και τους πρεσβυτερους ἡδιον ὁρᾶν παιδας αυτων εκεινῳ συγγιγνομενους η των οικειων επιμελουμενους. "Who coming to Egypt, and being instructed by the priests of that country, first introduced other kinds of learning into Greece, and particularly a more accurate knowledge of religious rites and ceremonies," (I have generalised the expression θυσιας και ἁγιστειας εν τοις ἱεροις,) "of which he was a careful observer, thinking that although he were entitled to no peculiar favour on that account from the gods, he would thereby at least procure esteem among men, which also happened to him: for he so far eclipsed the glory of all other philosophers, that all the young desired to become his disciples, and the old were better pleased to see their sons in the company of Pythagoras, than engaged in the most lucrative pursuits." If what is said in my account of the life and writings of Isocrates be considered with atten-

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Olymp. lvi. A. C. 560.

attention was, the secret symbolic writing of the priests, and the singular institutions and policy of the sacerdotal order, by which that body of men had long been enabled to govern prince and people.[54] At his return from Egypt and the east, Pythagoras found his native country governed, or rather insulted, by the artful and long fortunate Polycrates; a tyrant whose power seemed so firmly established, that there remained no hopes of subverting it, and under whose jealous eye the son of Mnesarchus could neither display his talents, nor enjoy personal security: he therefore returned to European Greece, and again assisted at the Olympic games; where, being saluted by the then honoured name of Sophist, he modestly declined that distinction for the humbler title of Philosopher; and when asked what he precisely meant by this new appellation, he is said to have replied, "That, in the same manner as at the Olympic assembly, some men came to contend for crowns and honours, others to sell their merchandise, and a third class merely to see and examine every thing which passed in that celebrated convention; so, on the greater theatre of the world, while many struggled for the glory of a name, and many for the advantages of fortune; a few, and but a few, neither covetous of money, nor ambitious of fame, were contented with beholding the wonders

tion, this passage will only serve to confirm the observations in the text.

[54] Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, passim; and Strabo, l. x. p. 482.

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of so magnificent a spectacle." [55] This definition has been often cited, because it well agrees with the contemplative notions generally ascribed to the Pythagorean school; but it will appear in the sequel, that the philosophy of Pythagoras was of a more practical kind.

From Olympia and the republic of Elis, he travelled to the neighbouring territory of Sparta [56], and spent a considerable time in that capital, diligently studying the laws of Lycurgus, and observing the manners and genius of the best governed, most virtuous, and most prosperous of all the Grecian states. Here he beheld a constitution of government (the wisdom of which had been long approved by experience) founded on a system of education; and combining, in his clear capacious mind, the Spartan laws and discipline with a mixture of the Egyptian craft and policy, he framed that sublime plan of legislation, which was to be far more extensive than the institutions of Lycurgus; and which, at first fixing its root in a small sect at Crotona, was destined, in twenty or thirty years, to diffuse its flourishing branches over Italy and Sicily.

Causes of his authority in Italy.

Pythagoras arrived at the capital of Italian Greece in his fortieth year, in the full vigour of mind and body. [57] His fame, doubtless, preceded him; since, whoever had honourably

[55] Cicero (Tusc. Quæst. v. 3.) has translated a passage to this purpose from Heraclides Ponticus, the scholar of Plato; and the original passage of Heraclitus is still preserved in Jamblichus.

[56] Porphy. Jambli. & Justin. l. xx.

[57] Aristoxen. apud Jambl.

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distinguished himself in the general convention at Olympia, was speedily known and celebrated in the remotest provinces of Greece. His personal acquaintances among the Italian Greeks, whose esteem, or rather respect, he had acquired in that august assembly, would naturally be loud in his praises; and the manners of the age, in which men lived together, in crowds, and enjoyed their pastimes, or transacted their serious business with undisguised freedom, in temples and gymnasia, contributed to the rapid increase of his friends and admirers. Upon his arrival at Crotona, he appeared in the public places, displaying his dexterity in those exercises and accomplishments, which were the fashionable objects of pursuit, and the principal sources of honour. His skill in music and medicine, sciences which were far better understood in his native country than in Magna Græcia, procured him particular regard; nor can we hesitate to believe, that his mathematical and natural knowledge would be highly admired by the Greeks of Italy, who, having recently received the first tincture of arts and sciences from the Asiatics, cultivated them with that ardour which novelty inspires; and who seem hitherto to have gained in point of knowledge and civility, in proportion as they had lost in purity of life and manners, by an acquaintance with their Eastern brethren.

His superior talents.

Neither the voluptuousness nor the refinement of the inhabitants of Magna Græcia, were incompatible with the hopes and fears of the most

His manner of life.

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puerile superstition; and Pythagoras, who had seen and examined the rites and ceremonies employed by remote nations celebrated for their antiquity and their wisdom, to avert the displeasure, or to gain the good-will of their invisible protectors, called forth, the whole force of this powerful, yet dangerous instrument of policy, to excite respect for his person, and reverence for his instructions. He carefully frequented, at an early hour, the temples of the gods; his regular purifications and sacrifices announced superior sanctity of character; his food was of the purest kind, that no corporeal stain might interrupt the fancied communication with his celestial friends; and he was clothed in the linen of Egypt, which formed the dress [58] of the sacerdotal order in that native land of superstition, as well as of the Athenian magistrates and nobles, in the early and pious times of their republic. [59] The respect excited by such artifices (if we may degrade by that name the means used to deceive men into their duty and happiness) was enhanced by the high renown, the long travels, the venerable aspect, the harmonious voice, the animated and affecting eloquence, of the Samian philosopher.

The happy revolution which he produced at Crotona.

His hearers sometimes amounted to two thousand of the principal citizens of Crotona; and the magistrates of that republic erected, soon after his arrival among them, an elegant and spacious edifice, which was appropriated to the virtuous lessons of this admired stranger, who pleased

[58] Diodorus

[59] Thucyd. l. i.

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their taste, and gratified their fancy, while he condemned their manners and reproached their vices. Equally rapid and astonishing, and not more astonishing than advantageous, if we may credit the general voice of antiquity, was the reformation produced at Crotona in persons of every age, and of either sex, by this singular man. The women laid aside their ornaments, and resumed their modesty; the youth preferred their duty to their pleasures; the old improved their understanding, and almost neglected to improve their fortunes. CHAP. XI.

His school.

Yet this revolution of manners was not surely so instantaneous, as the concurring exaggerations of wonder and credulity were naturally inclined to represent it. The same writers who would thus magnify the fame of Pythagoras, acknowledge, that soon after coming to Crotona, he chose a select number of his most assiduous disciples, and those chiefly persons of weight in the republic, whose temper, character, and views, best suited his own. These were formed into a distinct association or brotherhood, into which none were admitted who possessed not qualities and endowments worthy of that honour. In order to confirm this association, as well as to obtain the purposes for which it had been instituted, Pythagoras employed the cypher, or symbolic writing, and other secrets, which he had learned from the wisdom, or rather cunning, of the Egyptian priests: his scholars were taught certain signs or words, by which they might know each other; they could correspond, when

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separated by place, in an unknown character; and strangers of all countries, Greeks and Barbarians, were promiscuously admitted into the society, after undergoing a due probation as to their dispositions and understanding. In a few years, three hundred men, all Pythagoreans, held the sovereignty of Crotona; the influence of the new sect extended with rapidity over Locri, Rhegium, Catana, and other cities of Italy and Sicily; the disciples of Pythagoras were diffused over ancient Greece, and the isles of the Ægæan sea; and it seemed as if the sage of Samos, whose nobler ambition declined and disdained any particular office of power and dignity, had conceived the sublime idea of forming a school of enlightened statesmen, who might govern the world, while they were themselves governed by wisdom and virtue.

Its influence on affairs of state. Olymp. lvii. 3. A. C. 550.

His great views.

His politics.

Pythagoras was deeply persuaded, that the happiness of nations depends chiefly on the government under which they live; and the experience of his own times, and of his own island in particular, might teach him the dangerous tendency of democratic turbulence on the one hand, and jealous tyranny on the other.[60] He pre-

[60] A striking example of this appeared at that time in Sicily, if we credit Jamblichus, who places the reign of Phalaris, at Agrigentum, in the age of Pythagoras. The doubtful, or rather incredible, history of this tyrant, may be comprised in few words. His reign, of about sixteen years, was distinguished by intolerable atrocities. He burned his enemies in a brazen bull; and, as lust or cruelty happened to direct, sometimes abused, and sometimes eat, boys. Phalaris, together with his mother and friends, (could such a monster have friends?) were burned, by the long-injured Agrigentines, in his own bull. This is the abominable tyrant, whose spurious letters furnished

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ferred, therefore, to all governments, a moderate aristocracy; which seems, without exception, to have been the well-founded opinion of the greatest men of antiquity, since, under the administra- CHAP. XI.

an opportunity for Dr. Bentley to display his profound erudition (see his Dissert. upon Phalaris). But that very learned man seems not to suspect, that the popular history of Phalaris is as spurious as his epistles. It was a common artifice among the Greek poets and orators (see, in vol. i. p. 367. the speech of Sosicles the Corinthian) to exaggerate the vices of bad princes. Of this we shall find many examples in the following parts of this work. This practice began early; for Pindar says,

Τον δε ταυρῳ χαλκεῳ καυτηρα νηλεα νοον
Εχδρα Φαλαριν κατεχει ταυτα φατις.

PYTH. i. Επωδ. κωλ. ιε.

Aristotle mentions Το περι Φαλαριν λεγομενον, the hearsay about Phalaris, which Aspasius explains, Ὁ δε Φαλαρις λεγεται φαγειν τον ἑαυτου παιδα. Phalaris is said to have eaten his own son. In the same chapter (c. v. l. 6. Ethic. Nicom.), speaking of brutal passions, Aristotle instances Phalaris sometimes devouring boys, sometimes using them as the instruments of an absurd venereal pleasure; Προς αφροδισιων αποπον ἡδονην. The philosopher does not say, that he believes these monstrous fictions, any more than Cicero, "Ille nobilis taurus, quem crudelissimus omnium tyrannorum Phalaris *habuisse dicitur*;" l. iv. in Verrem, c. 33. Timæus, the historian of Sicily, who was more likely than any other writer to be well informed concerning the transactions in his own island, represents the story of Phalaris's bull as a mere fable. Polyb. Excerp. ver. 3. p. 47. Polybius, indeed, attempts to refute Timæus, but I think, as to the main point, with little success. Nor is it surprising that this judicious writer should be carried along by the torrent. The republicans of Greece and Rome delighted in blackening the characters of tyrants; Τραγῳδουντες δε την ὠμοτητα των τροπων, και την ασεβειαν των πραξεων; "exaggerating, after the manner of tragedians, the fierceness of their manners, and the impiety of their actions." For this reason, the absurd fictions concerning Dionysius of Syracuse, Alexander of Pheræ, &c. are related by many respectable writers. For this reason Hieronymus was described in the blackest colours, vide Excerp. ex Polyb. l. vii. p. 10. And for this reason the enormous cruelties of Phalaris, which no nation, and far less the Sicilians in that age, could have tolerated, receive countenance from some of the highest authorities of antiquity.

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tion of senates, the republics of Greece, of Rome, and of Carthage, attained their highest prosperity and splendour. Yet he was extremely averse to arbitrary power, whatever shape it might assume; and the main aim of his institution was, to prevent oppression in the magistrates and licentiousness in the people. The dead letter of the law could never, he thought, effect that salutary purpose, until men were so trained by education and discipline, as to regard the great duties of life as its most agreeable amusement, and to consider the esteem of their fellow-citizens, and their own, as the chief source of their enjoyment. Magistrates, thus formed, would command a willing obedience, and the inhabitants of Magna Græcia must soon attain the most perfect state of which political society is susceptible.

Morality.

To explain at large the system of Pythagoras, would be to write a treatise of sublime, yet practical morality, since his conclusions are strictly founded on the nature of man. Besides the propensities common to us with inferior natures, and besides the selfish and artificial passions of avarice and ambition, he found in the human breast the seeds of nobler faculties, fitted to yield an incomparably more durable, more perfect, and more certain gratification. The chief happiness of the mind must be sought in itself, in the enjoyment of intellectual and moral pleasure. Our reflex thoughts are ever, and intimately present with us; and although the bustle of external objects, and the tumult of passion may sometimes divert their current, they can never exhaust

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their source. The reflections on our own conduct will be continually occurring to our fancy, whatever pains we may take to exclude them; nor can voluptuous enjoyment, or ambitious activity, ever so totally occupy the mind of a Persian satrap, or a Grecian demagogue, but that their principal happiness or misery, in the whole course of life, must chiefly depend upon their contemplations of the past, and upon their hopes and fears about futurity. To strengthen this great ground-work of morality, Pythagoras employed the whole force of education and habit. Rules were laid down, to which the members of his respected order bound themselves to conform, and from which none could swerve, without exclusion from a society of which they proved themselves unworthy. The different periods of life had each its appropriated employment. The youth were carefully instructed in the gymnastic exercises, in literature[61], and in science, and especially in the laws and constitution of their country. Their time was so diversified by successive study, exercise, and repose, that no leisure remained for

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[61] So I have translated Εν γραμμασι και τοις αλλοις μαθημασι, of Aristoxenus apud Stobæum, Serm. xli. The learned reader will perceive, that I comprehend under the name of youth, the two different periods of life, or ηλικιαι, which the Greeks denoted by the words παις and νεανισκος, boy, and young man. I have done this, because it was not the intention of Aristoxenus, to say that the young men were not still to be employed in literature and science, or that the boys were to be kept ignorant of the laws and constitution. The rules of the Pythagorean school, and the laws of Lycurgus, often explain each other. See vol. i. p. 129, & seq. It may be worthy of remark, that Jean Jaques Rousseau has borrowed what is rational and practical in his system of education from these two great sources, as illustrated by Plutarch's tract on the subject.

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the premature growth of dangerous passions; and it was an important maxim of the Pythagorean school, that many things were best learned late [62], especially love; from which, if possible, the youth should be restrained till their twentieth year, and after that period should rarely, and with many precautions, indulge a passion, always hurtful to the weak, and which, when intemperately indulged, enfeebled the most vigorous. He required in those who had attained the age of manhood, that they should no longer live for themselves, but for the business of the community of which they were members. They were to employ the greatest part of the day in the duties of public spirit and patriotism; in the laborious or dangerous offices committed to their charge; and to derive their chief reward from reading in the eyes of their admiring countrymen, the history of their generous exploits; and from beholding all around them, the happy effects of their probity, beneficence, and fortitude.

Rules for the conduct of his disciples.

The Pythagoreans were strictly enjoined, as their earliest and latest work, to review the actions of the past, and, if time permitted, of many preceding days. In the morning they repaired alone to the temples, to solitary mountains and forests; and after there conversing with themselves, joined in the conversation of their friends, with whom they assembled, in small companies,

[62] Aristoxen. apud Stobæum, Serm. lxix. This is the great principle of Rousseau in his *Emile*. The passage of Aristoxenus concerning love, is almost literally translated in that ingenious but fanciful work.

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to an early and frugal meal, discussed different subjects of philosophy or politics, regulated their conduct for the ensuing day, and by the mutual strength and encouragement acquired in this select society, prepared for the tumultuous bustle of the world, and the contentions of active life. The evening was spent as the morning, with this difference, that they then indulged in the moderate use of flesh and wine, from which they rigidly abstained during the day; and the whole concluded with that self-examination which was the fundamental maxim of the Pythagorean school.

which coincide with the institutions of Lycurgus.

To enter more fully into the principles of this association, would be repeating what has been formerly observed concerning the laws of Lycurgus. It is sufficient barely to mention, that, like the legislator of Sparta, Pythagoras enjoined the highest respect for age; that, like him, he raised the weaker sex from that state of inferiority in which they were ungenerously kept in all other countries of Greece; that he enured his disciples to temperance and sobriety through the same means employed by Lycurgus; and that both these great men regarded health and vigour of body as the main principle and spring of mental energy; that the probationary silence of the Pythagoreans, which credulity has so much exaggerated, was nothing more than that prudent, recollected behaviour, required by Lycurgus, who prized higher the caution of silence than the readiness [63] of speech; and that the intimacy of

[63] Plut. in Lycurg.

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the Spartan and Pythagorean friendships, and almost the community of goods, naturally flowed from the general spirit and genius of their respective systems[64]; so that the rules of the Pythagorean order were little more than a transcript of the Spartan laws, as these laws themselves were only a refinement on the generous and manly institutions of the heroic ages.[65]

Origin of the fictions concerning Pythagoras.

In the history of a man who entertained such just notions of human life, as did the founder of the Pythagorean sect, we may at once reject, as fabulous, the tales related by the vain, lying Greeks, who lived in and after the age of Alexander, when their nation seems to have lost the love of truth along with its liberty, as well as the ridiculous wonders of the later Platonists, those contemplative visionaries, who, during the first centuries of the Christian æra, degraded ancient philosophers, by describing *their* active and useful lives, as if they had resembled their own scholastic tranquillity. Yet, after all, should the least extraordinary account of the Pythagorean order still seem incredible, it need only be observed, that modern history, and even our own observation, may have made us acquainted with orders of another kind, of which the rules are more difficult to be observed than those of the Pythagoreans: and it is equally unreasonable and ungenerous to suppose, that what our own experience teaches us may be done by the illiberal spirit of superstition, could not, in a hap-

[64] See vol. i. p. 135.

[65] Diodor. l. xii. p. 77, &c.

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pier age, be effected by the love of glory, of virtue, and of mankind.

War between Crotona and Sybaris.

The concurring testimony of historians assures us, that the school of Pythagoras had flourished above forty years, to the unspeakable benefit of Magna Græcia, when a war arose between Crotona and Sybaris, the latter of which had ever contemptuously rejected the Pythagorean institutions. The city of Sybaris was founded (as above mentioned) by the Achæans, on the confluence of the river Sybaris, from which the city derives its name, and the winding stream of Crathis, which descends from the Lucanian mountains. The fertility of the soil, the happy temperature of the climate, the resources of fishing, navigation, manufactures, and commerce, conspired, with the salutary effects of the Achæan laws, wonderfully to augment, in the course of two centuries, the strength and populousness of Sybaris, which was surrounded by walls nine miles in extent, commanded twenty-five subordinate cities, and, could we credit the evidence of writers often prone to exaggeration, brought three hundred thousand men into the field. [67]

The Sybarites conquered by Milo the Pythagorean. Olymp. lxvii. 4. A. C. 509.

Riches and luxury proved fatal to the Sybarites, whose effeminacy passed into a proverb [68], which has been transmitted to modern times. In a decisive battle, they were defeated by the citizens of Crotona under the command of Milo, a favourite disciple of Pythagoras, who had already

[67] Strabo, l. vi. p. 263. Diodor. ibid.

[68] Athenæus, l. xii. p. 518.

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obtained universal renown by his Olympic victories.[69]

Sedition in Crotona,

But the destruction of Sybaris was almost alike fatal to Crotona. The inferior ranks of men in that city, intoxicated with prosperity, and instigated by the artful and ambitious Cylon, whose turbulent manners had excluded him from the order of Pythagoras, into which he had repeatedly attempted to enter, became clamorous for an equal partition of the conquered territory of Sybaris; which being denied as inconsistent with the nature of aristocratical government, they secretly conspired against their magistrates, attacked them by surprise in the senate-house, put many to death, and drove the rest from their country. Pythagoras himself died soon afterwards, in extreme old age, at Metapontum in Lucania.[70] His disciples were scattered over Magna Græcia, and particularly Sicily, which, at the time of the Carthaginian invasion, was governed by men who had imbibed the sublime spirit of their illustrious master.

proves fatal to the Pythagoreans there.

The Carthaginians invade Sicily. Olymp. lxxv. 1. A. C. 480.

Gelon, who, eleven years before that event, had mounted the throne of Syracuse, was entitled, by the unanimous suffrage of his subjects, to the glorious, though often prostituted appellation, of Father of his country.[71] The mildness of his government restored the felicity of the heroic ages, whose equitable institutions had much affinity (as above observed) with the poli-

[69] Strabo, ibid. Pausanias, l. vi. p. 369.

[70] Aristoxenus.

[71] Ælian. Var. Hist. l. xiii. c. xxxvii. Plut. in Timol.

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tical system of Pythagoras. This virtuous prince had cemented an alliance with Theron, King of Agrigentum, by taking his daughter in marriage; and the confederacy of the two principal states of Sicily seemed to have diffused security and happiness over the whole island, when the immense armament of Carthage was beheld off the northern coast. Though not absolutely destitute of naval strength, the Sicilians had nothing by which they could oppose a fleet of two thousand gallies. The enemy landed without opposition in the spacious harbour, or rather bay, of Panormus, whose name may be still recognized in the modern capital Palermo, where the Carthaginians had planted one of their most ancient colonies. Their forces were commanded by Hamilcar, who was deemed a brave and experienced leader. The first care of this general was to fortify two camps; the one destined for his fleet, which, according to the practice of that age, was drawn on shore; the other intended as a safe retreat for his army, which immediately prepared to form the siege of Himera. Theron used proper measures to defend the second city in his dominions, until his son-in-law, the intrepid Gelon, should arrive to his assistance at the head of an army of fifty thousand foot and five thousand horse. While this numerous army advanced, by rapid marches, towards Himera, they rencountered a foraging party of the enemy, and made ten thousand prisoners. But what appeared a still more important booty to the discernment of Gelon, they seized a messenger from Selinus, a

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city in the neighbourhood of Agrigentum, which had entered into a treacherous correspondence with the Carthaginians. The prisoner conveyed a letter to Hamilcar, acquainting him, that the Selinuntines would not fail to send the cavalry demanded from them at the appointed time, which was likewise particularly specified. Upon this discovery, Gelon founded a stratagem, not more daring than successful. He commanded a chosen body of troops to advance in the night towards the Carthaginian camp, and by day-break to present themselves to Hamilcar, as his Selinuntine auxiliaries; and when admitted, by this arrifice, within his rampart, to assassinate the general and set fire to the fleet. [72]

Defeated by a stratagem.

It happened on the fatal day, that Hamilcar offered a solemn sacrifice to the cruel divinity of Carthage, who delighted in human victims. While he performed this abominable rite, the soldiers surrounded him unarmed, in the gloomy silence of their detested superstition, with which their minds were totally penetrated. The Sicilian cavalry, being admitted without suspicion, thus found no difficulty to execute their audacious design. Hamilcar, while he sacrificed an innocent and noble youth to his blood-thirsty god, was himself dispatched with a dagger; and, next moment, the Carthaginian ships were in a blaze. A chain of Sicilian centinels, posted on the neighbouring eminences, intimated to Gelon the happy success of his stratagem; of

[72] Diodor. l. ix. sect. 25. et seq. Polyæn. l. i. c. xxvii.

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which, in order fully to avail himself, that gallant commander immediately conducted the main body of his troops to the Carthaginian army, while it was yet agitated by surprise and terror at the sudden conflagration. The furious onset of the Sicilians made a dreadful havoc among the astonished Barbarians, who recovering, however, their faculties, began to defend themselves with vigour; when the melancholy tidings, that their ships were all burnt, and their general slain, drove them to despair and flight. Gelon commanded his troops not to give quarter to an enemy, who, though defeated, still seemed formidable by their numbers. It is reported, that an hundred and fifty thousand perished in the battle, and the pursuit. The remainder seized an eminence, where they could not long maintain themselves, for want of water and provisions. In the language of an ancient historian, all Africa seemed to be taken captive in Sicily. Gelon distributed the prisoners among the Sicilian cities, in proportion to the contingents of troops which they had respectively raised for this memorable service. The greater part falling to the share of Syracuse and Agrigentum, were employed in beautifying and enlarging those capitals[73], whose magnificent monuments, still conspicuous in their ruins, are supposed, with great probability, to be productions of Carthaginian labour.

Their disasters.

The melancholy tidings affected Carthage with consternation and despair. The inhabitants

Treaty of peace between Ge-

[73] Cicero, Orat. iv. in Verrem.

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Gelon and the Carthaginians.

of that city, ever shamefully depressed by bad fortune, in proportion as they were immoderately elated by the deceitful gifts of prosperity, dreaded every moment to behold the victorious enemy in their harbour. To ward off this calamity, their ambassadors were sent to crave a suspension of hostilities on any terms the victorious Greeks might think proper to impose. Gelon received them with such moderation as marked the superiority of his character, and told them, that he would desist from every purpose of revenge, on condition that the Carthaginians paid two thousand talents of silver, to be distributed among the cities of Sicily, which had incurred trouble and expence by the war; that they henceforth abstained from the abominable practice of insulting the gods by human victims; that they erected two temples, one in Carthage, another in Syracuse, to preserve the memory of the war, and the articles of the peace.[74]

Olymp. lxxxii. A. C. 449.

This honourable treaty was a prelude to that still more famous, concluded thirty years afterwards between the Athenians and Persians. It marked a nation superior to its enemies not only in valour but in humanity, and conferred more true glory than could be acquired by the most splendid series of victories. It might be expected, however, and seems much to have been desired, that a people so advantageously distinguished as were the Greeks during that age in arts and arms; a people who had repelled, de-

A. C. 504.

[74] Diodor. Sicul. ibid.

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feated, and disgraced the most populous and powerful nations, and who were alike prompted, by ambition and revenge, to the attainment of distant conquest, should have united their efforts against the enemies who still made war on them, and, advancing in a rapid career of victory, have diffused, along with their dominion, their manners, knowledge, and civility over the eastern world. But various events and causes, which we shall have occasion afterwards to explain, tended to detach the colonies of Magna Græcia from the interests of the mother-country, as well as to disunite the two most powerful republics of that country by intestine discord.

While the fortune of Athens raised her to such power as threatened the liberty of Sicily and Greece, the Kings of Syracuse and Agrigentum contented themselves with the humbler glory of embellishing their capitals with barbaric spoils, and producing those wonders of art, which, in the time of Cicero and Verres, were esteemed among the most precious monuments of antiquity.[75] The golden medals of Gelon, still preserved and of the highest beauty[76], justify the glowing expressions of the Roman orator.

Decay of Magna Græcia, and destruction of the Pythagoreans.

In Italy, the citizens of Crotona had too soon cause to lament their insurrection against their magistrates, and their dereliction of the discipline of Pythagoras. They who had hitherto defeated superior numbers, who had furnished so many victors in the Olympic contest, and whose country

[75] Cicero in Verrem, passim.

[76] Mem. de Trevoux, l'an. 1727, p. 1449.

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was distinguished by the epithet of healthy, on a supposition that the vigorous bodies of its inhabitants proceeded from an effect of the climate, were now totally routed and put to flight at the river Sagra, with an army of an hundred and thirty thousand men, by the Locrians and Rhegians, whose forces were far less numerous. The other Greek cities of Italy, which are said to have imitated the fatal example of Crotona, were harassed by wars against each other, or against their barbarous neighbours. In consequence of these misfortunes, the Pythagoreans again recovered their credit; and about sixty years after the death of the great founder of their order, Zaleucus and Charondas, the first in Locri, the second in Thurium, endeavoured to revive the Pythagorean institutions, which, perhaps, were too perfect for the condition of the times. In less than forty years a new persecution entirely drove the Pythagoreans from Italy, and completed, according to Polybius, the confusion and misery of that once happy country. [77]

[77] Polybius, i. 903.

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Glory of Athens. — Military Success of the Confederates. — Athens rebuilt and fortified. — Extent of its Walls and Harbours. — The Confederates take Byzantium. — Conspiracy of Pausanias. — Banishment of Themistocles. — Virtue of Aristides. — Cimon assumes the Command. — His illustrious Merits and Success. — Revolt of Egypt. — War in Cyprus. — Peace with Persia. — Domestic Transactions of Greece. — The Athenian Greatness. — Envy of Sparta, Thebes, and Argos. — Earthquake in Sparta. — Revolt of the Helots. — War between the Elians and Pisans. — The Temple and Statue of Olympian Jupiter. — Dissensions in Argolis. — Revolt in Bœotia. — Truce of Thirty Years. — Character of Pericles. — Subjection of the Athenian Allies and Colonies. — Spirit of the Athenian Government.

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The glory of Athens; A. C. 479—431.

FROM the battles of Mycalé and Platæa, to the memorable war of Peloponnesus, elapsed half a century, the most illustrious in the Grecian annals. A single republic, one of sixteen states, whose united possessions hardly equalled the extent of Scotland, and whose particular territory is scarcely visible in a map of the world, carried on an offensive war against the Persian empire, and, though surrounded by jealous allies or open

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enemies, prosecuted this extraordinary enterprise with unexampled success; at length, granting such conditions of peace as the pride of victory may dictate, and the weight of accumulated disasters condescend to solicit or accept. In that narrow space of time the same republic erected, on the feeble basis of her scanty population and diminutive territory, a mighty mass of empire; established and confirmed her authority over the extent of a thousand miles of the Asiatic coast, from Cyprus to the Thracian Bosphorus; took possession of forty intermediate islands[1], together with the important straits which join the Euxine and the Ægæan; conquered and colonised the winding shores of Macedon and Thrace; commanded the coast of the Euxine from Pontus to the Chersonesus Taurica, or Crim Tartary; and, overawing the barbarous natives by the experienced terrors of her fleet[2], protected against *their* injustice and violence, but at the same time converted to the purposes of her own ambition and interest, the numerous but scattered colonies which Miletus, and other Greek cities of Asia, had at various times established in those remote regions.[3] Our wonder will be justly increased, if we consider that Athens obtained those immortal trophies, not over ignorant savages or effeminate slaves, but over men who

in arms;

[1] Several of these islands had been formerly conquered by Athenian commanders, particularly Miltiades, as we have related above; but having rebelled against the severe government of Athens, they were finally subdued by Pericles.

[2] Plut. in Pericle.

[3] Strabo, Geograph. passim.

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had the same language and laws, the same blood and lineage, the same arts and arms, in short, every thing common with the victors but their audacity and fortune. CHAP. XII.

But it is the peculiar glory of the Athenians in arts; that, during this rapid career of military and naval triumphs, they cultivated, with a generous enthusiasm, the arts which adorn alike war and peace, and improved those decorations of polished life into such perfection as few nations have attempted to imitate, and none aspired to surpass. During the administration of a single man, more works of elegance and splendour, more magnificent temples, theatres, porticoes, and gymnasia were erected within the walls of Athens, than could be raised during many centuries in Rome, though mistress of the world, by the wealth and labour of tributary provinces.[4] In the same period of time sculpture attained a sublimity, from which that noble art could never afterwards but descend and degenerate; and a republic hitherto inferior in works of invention and genius to several of her neighbours, and even of her own colonies, produced, in the single life-time of Pericles, those inestimable models of poetry, eloquence, and philosophy[5], which, in every succeeding age, the enlightened portion of mankind hath invariably regarded as the best standards,

[4] Plutarch. in Pericle.

[5] Pericles may be considered as the contemporary of Socrates, Sophocles, Euripides, Thucydides, &c. since, although he died before them of the plague, these and other great men flourished during his administration.

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not merely of composition and style, but of taste and reason. The name of Greek seemed thenceforth to be lost in that of Athenian; Athenian writers are our surest and almost only guides in relating the subsequent transactions of the whole nation[6]; and from them we learn what is yet the most extraordinary circumstance respecting the Athenian empire, that it had been built on such stable foundations, and reared with such art and skill, as might have long defied the hostile jealousy of Greece and Persia, confederate in arms and resentment, if various causes, which human prudence could neither foresee nor prevent, had not shaken its firmness and precipitated its downfall.[7]

Such is the subject which I have undertaken to treat in this and the two following Chapters; a subject worthy to animate the diligence, and call forth the vigour of an historian: but, if he truly deserves that respected name, he will remember that it is less his duty to amuse the fancy by general description, than to explain, with precision and perspicuity, the various transactions of this interesting and splendid theme; to give the reader a full and distinct view of the complicated matter which it involves; and to remove every adventitious circumstance that might distract or dazzle the attention, as astronomers, in viewing the sun, are careful to ward off its surrounding splendour.

[6] I mean Thucydides and Xenophon, together with the Athenian orators, philosophers, and poets.

[7] Thucyd. l. vii. & viii. passim.

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Military success of that republic.

The military success of the Athenians[8] (which naturally forms the first branch of the subject, because it not only supplied the materials of future improvements, but awakened that energy requisite to cultivate and complete them) includes three separate actions which were carried on at the same time, and conspired to the same end, yet cannot be related in one perpetual narrative, without occasioning some confusion of ideas, alike destructive of the pleasure and of the use of history. While we endeavour to keep each series of events unbroken and distinct, we must be careful to point out its influence on the simultaneous or succeeding transactions of the times, that our relation may be at once satisfactory and faithful. In such a delineation, the trophies of the Persian war justly claim the first and most conspicuous place; the hostile animosity of rival states, which continually envied and opposed, but for reasons that will be fully explained, could neither prevent nor retard the growing superiority of Athens, shall occupy the middle of the picture; and we shall throw into the back-ground the successive usurpations of that fortunate republic over her allies, colonies, and neighbours.

Division of the subject.

The common fears which, notwithstanding in-

[8] The chief materials for this portion of history consist in the first and second books of Thucydides; the eleventh and twelfth of Diodorus Siculus; Plutarch's lives of Themistocles, Aristides, Cimon, Pericles; Pausanias's Description of Greece, and Pliny's Natural History: scattered facts are supplied by other ancient writers, whose works will be carefully cited.

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The Athenians take Sestos. Olymp. lxxv. 2. A. C. 479.

numerable sources of animosity, had formed, and hitherto upheld, a partial confederacy of the Greeks, were removed by the decisive victories of Platæa and Mycalé. After these memorable events, it was the first care of the Athenians to bring home their wives, children, and most valuable effects from the isles of Ægina and Salamis. In the latter island they celebrated their good fortune by a national solemnity. The sublime Sophocles joined in the chorus of boys, which danced, in exultation, around the Barbarian spoils[9]; the valour of his predecessor, Æschylus, had contributed to the victories by which they were obtained; and his rival, the tender Euripides, was born in the isle of Salamis[10], on that important day, which proved alike glorious to Greece, and fatal to Persia. But an attention to domestic concerns prevented not the Athenians from pushing the war with vigour, though deserted by the Spartans and other Peloponnesians, who sailed home before winter. The Asiatic colonies, animated by the recent recovery of freedom, seconded the Athenian ardour; and the confederates, having successfully infested the territories of the Great King, besieged and took the rich city of Sestos in the Chersonesus of Thrace, the only place of strength which adhered to the Persian interest in that fertile peninsula.[11]

[9] Athenæus, l. i.
[10] Vitæ Euripid.
[11] Herodot. l. ix. c. cvi. Diodor. l. xi c. xxxvii.

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During the two following years the war languished abroad, while the symptoms of jealousy and discord, which had already appeared in the separation of the Athenian and Spartan fleets, broke out with more virulence at home. The Athenians began the laborious task of re-building their ruined city, which the Persian spoils might contribute to enrich with uncommon magnificence, and which an acquaintance gained in the course of the war with the graceful forms of Ionic and Doric architecture, might enable them to adorn with more beauty and elegance than had yet been displayed in Europe. But the weighty advice of Themistocles prevailed on them to suspend this noble undertaking, and engaged them, instead of decorating their capital with temples, theatres, and gymnasia, to fortify it by walls of such strength and solidity as might thenceforth bid defiance to every enemy, whether foreign or domestic. In an age when the art of attack was so rude and imperfect, that the smallest fortress formed an object of importance, such a design could not fail of exciting jealousy in the neighbouring republics. The measure was scarcely determined when an embassy arrived from Sparta, remonstrating against a design peculiarly dangerous and alarming to those who owed their safety to the weakness of their cities. "If the Greeks," it was said, "had possessed any town of impregnable strength, they must have found it impossible to expel the Barbarians from their country. The Athenians therefore, who had hitherto so generously maintained the cause of

Athens rebuilt and fortified. Olymp. lxxv. 3, 4. A. C. 478. & 477.

Jealousy of Sparta,

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the confederacy, ought not only to desist from raising walls and fortifications, but even to interrupt a similar design in any republic beyond the isthmus; the Peloponnesus was alone sufficient to afford, in time of danger, a secure refuge to the whole Grecian name.

discovered by Themistocles;

Themistocles easily unveiled the suspicion and hatred concealed under this specious mask of public utility, and encouraged his countrymen to elude the Spartan artifice by similar address. The senate of the five hundred, who gave audience to foreign ambassadors, declared that Athens would adopt no measure inconsistent with the public interest, and promised speedily to send an embassy, in their turn, which should remove all groundless apprehensions entertained on that subject. The Lacedæmonians having returned with this temporising answer, Themistocles was immediately dispatched to Sparta, and expected, as he had previously concerted matters with his countrymen[12], to be followed, at a proper time, by Aristides, the most respected character of his age; and by Lisicles, an able orator in the senate and assembly. Meanwhile the Athenian walls arose with unexampled celerity. Not only slaves, professed artificers, and the poorer classes of citizens, but magistrates of the first rank, the venerable fathers of the republic, wrought with their own hands, and with unceasing industry. The feeble efforts of women and children contributed to the useful labour. The

[12] Idem ibid. & in Themist. Lysias Orat. Funeb. & cont. Alcib.

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most superstitious of men neglected their accustomed solemnities, and no longer acknowledged the distinction of days or seasons: nor did even the silent tranquillity of night abate the ardour of their diligence. The ruins of their city happily supplied them with a rich variety of materials: no edifice was spared, public or private, sacred or profane; the rude sculpture of ancient temples, even the mutilated tombs of their ancestors, were confounded in the common mass: and, at the distance of near a century, the singular appearance of the wall, composed of stones rough and unpolished, of various colours and unequal size, attested the rapid exertions by which the work had been constructed. [13]

and its effects eluded by his address.

Themistocles had hitherto, under various pretences, avoided declaring his commission before the Spartan senate. When urged to this measure by some of the magistrates who began to suspect his silence, he still alleged the absence of his colleagues as a sufficient reason for delay. But a company of travellers, who had recently visited Athens, gave intelligence of the extraordinary works carrying on in that city. This information, and the resentment of the Spartans which it occasioned, must have disconcerted a man who possessed less cool boldness than the commander at Salamis and Artemisium. But Themistocles, with the address congenial to his character, asserted, that it was unworthy the gravity of Sparta to regard the vague ru-

[13] Thucydid. l. i. c. lxxxix. & seq.

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mours of obscure men; and that, before lightly suspecting the approved fidelity of their allies, she ought to bestow some pains in discovering the truth. This declaration was enforced, it is said, by seasonable bribes to the most popular of the Ephori; so that the Spartans, deluded or corrupted, agreed to dispatch a second embassy to Athens, consisting of some of their most respectable citizens. These men had no sooner arrived at their destination, than they were taken into custody, as pledges for the safe return of Themistocles and his colleagues, who by this time had brought him the welcome news, that the walls were completed. The Athenian ambassadors were now prepared to throw off the mask. They appeared in the Lacedæmonian assembly; and Themistocles, speaking for the rest, declared, that his countrymen needed not to learn from their confederates, what measures were honourable to themselves, and beneficial to the common cause; that, by his advice, they had firmly defended their city against the assaults of open enemies and jealous friends; and that, if Sparta entertained any resentment of this measure, which was evidently not less conducive to the public interest, than, perhaps, displeasing to private ambition, her anger would be equally unjust and impotent, since her own citizens must remain as hostages at Athens till his colleagues and himself should be restored in safety to their country.[14] Whatever secret indignation this

[14] Plut. &c. ibid.

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speech might excite, the Spartans thought proper to disguise their animosity. They allowed the ambassadors to return home; but the conduct of Themistocles laid the foundation of that relentless hatred with which he was persecuted by Sparta, whose intrigues engaged all Greece, not excepting Athens herself, in the destruction of this illustrious citizen. Yet his eminent services, before they were interrupted by this storm of persecution, aggravates the shame of his country, and displays more fully her signal ingratitude.[15]

Themistocles builds the Piræus. Olymp. lxxv. 4. A. C. 477.

The ancient Athenian harbour of Phalericum was small, narrow, and inconvenient. To supply its defects, Themistocles, even before the Persian invasion, had recommended the Piræus, a place five miles distant from the citadel, furnished with three natural basins, which, if properly fortified, might form a far more commodious and secure station for the Athenian navy. The foundations were laid, and the walls began to rise, when the cruel ravages of the Barbarians interrupted the undertaking. Having in the preceding year fortified the city, Themistocles thought the present a proper time to finish the new harbour.[16] His address, his eloquence, and his bribes, were seasonably applied to divert the resentment of Sparta, who, though thenceforth less jealous of the naval than military power of her rival, threatened, on this occasion, to enter

[15] Diodor. l. xi. p. 437.

[16] Thucydid. l. i. c. xciii. Plut. in Themist. Diodor. xi. 436.

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Attica with an armed force. But the artful Athenian found means to convince the Spartans and their allies, that the construction of a strong and capacious harbour was a matter essentially requisite to the common interest of the Grecian confederacy. The work, meantime, was carried on at Athens with much spirit and activity, and, in less than a twelvemonth, brought to such a prosperous conclusion as could scarcely be credited, but on the testimony of a contemporary historian of the most approved diligence and fidelity.[17] The new walls were sufficiently broad to admit two carriages abreast; the stones composing them were of an immense size, strongly united by bars of iron, which were fastened by melted lead. The Piræus soon grew into a town, containing many thousand inhabitants. It was joined to the city by walls begun by Cimon, but finished by Pericles, twenty years after the harbour itself had been constructed.

A. C. 457. The new buldings of Cimon and Pericles are often mentioned in history under the name of the Long Walls. They extended forty stadia on either side; and when added to the circumference of the ancient city (about sixty stadia), give us for the whole circuit of the Athenian fortifications an extent of nearly eighteen English miles.[18]

The war against Persia con-

The altercations and animosities excited by such undertakings among the confederates at

[17] Thucydid. ubi supra.

[18] Pausanias, p. 20, & seq. Strabo, p 391, & seq. Plut. in Cimon.

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home, prevented not their united arms from assaulting the dominions of the great King. Thirty Athenian, and fifty Peloponnesian ships, had been employed to expel the Persian garrisons from the sea-ports which they still occupied in the Hellespont, the Propontis, and the Ægæan isles. The European fleet, being seasonably joined by various squadrons from the Greek cities of Asia, scoured the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, and delivered from oppression the long enslaved island of Cyprus. Their next operation must have been at a considerable distance of time, since they had to return near two hundred leagues westward, and then to proceed almost as far towards the north, and the Bosphorus of Thrace. At the entrance of this celebrated canal, which joins the Euxine and Propontis, the city of Byzantium, destined in future ages to become the seat of empire, and long to remain the chief emporium of Europe and of Asia, had been first founded by a feeble colony of Megareans, which had gradually become populous, flourishing, and independent, but which was actually commanded and insulted by armed Barbarians. It is not probable that Xerxes, or his ministers, perceived the peculiar security of Byzantium, situate between the Bosphorus and the Hellespont, two straits, which it might occasionally shut to an hostile navy, or open to the fleets of commerce. But had they been sensible of this advantage, the misfortunes, hitherto attending all their maritime enterprises, must have rendered it im-

tinued by the confederates;

who take Byzantium. Olymp. 1. lxxvi. 1. A. C. 476.

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possible to encourage their seamen to resist a victorious enemy. They discovered, however, more than their usual vigour, in defending by land, a place which they regarded as the centre of very valuable possessions. The adjacent coast of Thrace forms a striking contrast with the inland parts of that country. Instead of bleak heaths and snowy mountains, which deform the inhospitable regions of Hæmus and Rhodopé, the maritime provinces produce in abundance, vines, olives, the most necessary grains, and the most delicious fruits. The climate vies with the delightful softness of the Asiatic plains; and the soil had been long cultivated by Greek colonies, who had widely extended themselves on both sides of Byzantium. The Barbarians strengthened the garrison of the place, which was well supplied with provisions, and commanded by Persians of the first distinction, among whom were several kinsmen of the great King. The siege was obstinate, but the events of it are not described in history. It is only known, that the walls were stormed, and that an immense booty, together with many Persian princes and nobles, fell into the hands of the victors.[19]

The conspiracy of Pausanias;

Here ends the glory of Pausanias, who still commanded the forces of the confederacy; a man whose fame would rival the most illustrious names of antiquity, had he fallen in the siege of Byzantium. The rich spoils of Platæa, of which the tenth was allotted to him as general, raised

[19] Plut. in Aristid. Thucydid. l. i. 95, et seq. Diodor. l. xi. 44—46.

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him above the equality required by the republican institutions of his country. His recent conquest still farther augmented his wealth and inflamed his ambition: a continual flow of prosperity, which is apt to stagger the best regulated minds, overset the towering pride of Pausanias. As he conceived himself too great to remain a subject, he was willing to become a sovereign, through the assistance of Xerxes, the inveterate enemy of his country. To this prince he made application, by means of Gongylus the Eretrian, a fit instrument for any kind of villainy. To such an associate Pausanias had entrusted the noble Persians taken in Byzantium. This man escaped with his prisoners across the Bosphorus, and conveyed a letter to the great King, in which the Spartan general having mentioned, as an indubitable proof of his sincerity, the restoring his captive kinsmen, proposed to enter into strict amity with Xerxes, to take his daughter in marriage, to second his efforts in conquering Greece, and to hold that country as a dependent province of the Persian empire. The Persian is said to have highly relished these proposals, the subjugation of Greece being the great object of his reign. It is certain that he speedily sent Artabazus, a nobleman of confidence, to confer and co-operate with the traitor. CHAP. XII.

But Pausanias himself acted with the precipitancy and inconsistency of a man, who had either been deluded into treason by bad advice, or totally intoxicated by the dangerous vapours of ambition that floated in his distempered brain. Instead of dissembling his designs until they ill conducted.

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were ripe for execution, he assumed at once the tone of a master and the manners of a tyrant. He became difficult of access to his colleagues in command; disdained their advice in concerting measures which they were ordered to execute; he was surrounded by guards, chosen from the conquered Barbarians; and he punished the slightest offence in the allied troops with a rigour hitherto unknown to the Grecian discipline. He still managed, indeed, the fierce spirits of the Spartans, but without any degree of prudence, since the distinctions which he demanded for *them*, tended only to irritate and inflame their confederates, who were not allowed to forage, to draw water, to cut down straw for their beds, until the countrymen of Pausanias had been previously furnished with all these articles.

The allies reject his authority; Olymp. lxxvi. 1. A. C. 476.

This intolerable insolence disgusted and provoked the army in general, but especially the Ionians, who lamented that they had been no sooner delivered from the shackles of Persian despotism, than they were bent under the severer and more odious yoke of Sparta. By common consent they repaired to the Athenian Aristides, and his colleague Cimon, the son of Miltiades, a youth of the fairest hopes, who had signalised his patriotism and valour in all the glorious scenes of the war. Their designs being approved by these Athenian commanders, Uliades and Antagoras, respectively entrusted with the fleets of Samos and Chies, the bravest of all the maritime allies, seized the first opportunity to insult the galley of Pausanias: and when reproached and threatened by the Spartan

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they desired him to thank Fortune, who had favoured him at Platæa, the memory of which victory alone saved him from the immediate punishment of his arrogance and cruelty. These words speedily re-echoed through the whole fleet, and served, as soon as they were heard, for the signal of general revolt. The different squadrons of Asia and the Hellespont sailed from their stations, joined the ships of Uliades and Antagoras, loudly declared against the insolent ambition of Pausanias, abjured the proud tyranny of Sparta, and for ever ranged themselves under the victorious colours of Athens, whose generous magnanimity seemed best fitted to command the willing obedience of freemen.[20]

and submit to the Athenians.

This revolution had immediate and important effects, which we shall proceed to explain, when we have punished and dismissed the unworthy Pausanias. Apprised of his malversation and treachery, the Spartan senate recalled him, to stand trial for his life. But his immense wealth enabling him to corrupt the integrity of his judges, he escaped without farther punishment than degradation from his office, and paying a heavy fine. In his stead, the Spartans substituted not one admiral, but several captains, with divided authority, thereby to remove the odium and resentment which the insolence of unlimited command had excited among their confederates. Pausanias, though divested of his public character, having accompanied these officers to the Hellespont, in a vessel fitted out at his private

Pausanias recalled by the Spartans. Olymp. lxxvi. 2. A. C. 475.

Returns to the east;

[20] Nepos in Pausan. Plutarch. in Aristid.

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expence, began to display more arrogance than ever. He disdained not only the manners and behaviour, but the dress and appearance of a Greek; carried on, almost openly, his treacherous correspondence with Artabazus; increased the number of his Barbarian guards and attendants; trampled with contempt on the most revered institutions of his country; and displayed that provoking pomp of power, and that offensive ostentation of vice, which disgraced the profligate lives of the Persian satraps.[21]

recalled by the scytalé;

When the Spartan magistrates received a full account of his pride and folly, they were apprehensive lest he might refuse to return home on an ordinary summons, and therefore employed the form of the syctalé, a form reserved for the most solemn occasions. The scytalé (for opinion can give importance to any thing) was only a narrow scroll of parchment, which had been rolled on a piece of wood, and then stamped with the decree of the republic. Every Spartan invested with authority at home or abroad, possessed a tally exactly corresponding to the rod on which the parchment had been first rolled. By applying his tally, the words of the scytalé necessarily arranged themselves in their original form, and attested the authentic command of the magistrate. As tutor to the infant King of Sparta, Pausanias had been furnished with an instrument of this kind; and such is the effect of legal formality, that a man who would probably have despised the injunction of a simple letter, re-

[21] Thucydid. i. 95. & 128.

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turned without delay to a country which he had betrayed, when his recall was accompanied with this frivolous, but respected ceremony. CHAP. XII.

The external professions, and hypocritical pedantry of Spartan virtue, were most shamefully detected and exposed in the whole affair of Pausanias. Though convicted of the most odious tyranny, extortion, and profligacy, he was still allowed to enjoy the benefit of personal freedom; to correspond by frequent messages with his accomplice Artabazus; and, at length, to tamper with the Helots and Messenians, those oppressed slaves, who were ever ready to rebel against imperious and cruel masters. But as it exceeded even the opulence and effrontery of Pausanias, to corrupt and influence the whole republic, those who had either escaped the general contagion of venality, or who were offended at not sharing his bribes, accused him, a third time, of treason to Greece, in consequence of an event which enabled them in the fullest manner to make good the charge. An unhappy youth, who lived with Pausanias as the wretched instrument of his pleasure, was destined by that monster to become the victim of his ambition. He was charged with a letter from his master to Artabazus, in which, after explaining the actual state of his affairs, Pausanias hinted to him, as had been his usual practice, to destroy the bearer. The suspicious youth, who had observed that none of those sent on such errands ever returned to their country, broke open the letter, and read his own fate. Fired with resentment, he instantly and punished.

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carried the writing to the enemies of Pausanias, who prudently advised the messenger to take refuge in the temple of Neptune, expecting that his master would soon follow him. Meanwhile they practised a concealment in the wall of the temple, and having acquainted the Ephori, and other chief magistrates, with their contrivance for convicting the traitor by his own words, they obtained a deputation to accompany them, to remain concealed with them in the temple, and to overhear the mutual reproaches between Pausanias and his messenger. Yet the superstition of the Spartans permitted them not to seize the criminal in that sacred edifice. He was allowed to retire in safety; and when the senate had at length determined to lay hold of him, he was privately admonished of his danger by some members of that venal assembly. Upon this intelligence, he took refuge in the temple of Minerva, from which it being unlawful to drag him, that asylum was surrounded by guards; all necessaries were denied the prisoner, and he thus perished by hunger.[22]

Aristides entrusted with the finances of the confederates. Olymp. lxxvi. 2. A. C. 475.

The late punishment of this detestable traitor could not repair the ruinous effects of his misconduct and villany. Not only the Ionians, who had first begun the revolt, but the foreign confederates in general, loudly rejected the pretensions of Dorcis and other captains whom the Spartans appointed to command them. A few communities of Peloponnesus still followed the

[22] Thucyd. l. i. c. cxxviii. & seq. Diodor. l. xi. c. xliv. & Nepos in Pausan.

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Lacedæmonian standard; but the islanders and Asiatics unanimously applied to Aristides, to whose approved wisdom and virtue they not only entrusted the operations of the combined armament, but voluntarily submitted their more particular concerns: and experience soon justified their prudent choice. Pay was not yet introduced into the Grecian service, because the character of *soldier* was not separated from that of *citizen*. It had been usual, however, to raise annually a certain proportion of supplies among the several confederates, in order to purchase arms, to equip and victual the gallies, and to provide such engines of war as seemed requisite in storming the fortified towns belonging to the common enemy.[23] By unanimous suffrage, Aristides was appointed to new-model and apply this necessary tax, which had been imposed and exacted by the Spartans without sufficient attention to the respective faculties of the contributaries. The honest Athenian executed this delicate office with no less judgment than equity. The whole annual imposition amounted to four hundred and sixty talents, about ninety thousand pounds sterling; which was proportioned with such nice accuracy, that no state found the smallest reason to complain of any unjust partiality. The common treasure was kept in the central and sacred island of Delos; and, though entrusted to the personal discretion of the Athenian commander, was soon conceived to lie at the disposition of his republic.[24]

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Their amount.

[23] Plut. in Aristid. p. 532, & seq.

[24] Ibid. p. 534. Thucydid. l. i. c. xcvi. Diodor. p. 440.

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Merit and persecution of Themistocles.

While the merit of Aristides thus procured his countrymen the management of the national treasure of Greece, Themistocles was equally successful in improving the internal resources of the state. By yielding more protection to strangers than they enjoyed in neighbouring cities, he augmented not only the populousness, but the wealth of Athens, as that description of men paid an annual contribution in return for their security.[25] This, together with other branches of the revenue, he employed in building annually about sixty gallies, the addition of which to the Athenian navy abundantly compensated such losses as were sustained by the accidents of the sea in foreign parts. Notwithstanding the envy and malice of worthless demagogues, who infested the Athenian assembly and courts of justice, Themistocles was fast advancing to the attainment of the same authority at home, which Aristides enjoyed abroad, when complaints arrived from Sparta, that he had conspired with Pausanias to betray the public liberty. The known resentment of the Spartans against this extraordinary man, sufficiently explains the reason why they, who were so dilatory in their proceedings against Pausanias himself, should be so eager to bring to punishment his supposed accomplice. But it is not easy to conceive, how the Athenians could admit such an accusation against a citizen, whose singular valour and conduct had gained the decisive victory at Salamis; whose counsels and address had fortified their city with impregnable strength; whose foresight

[25] Lysias adv. Philon.

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and activity had procured them a fleet which no nation in the world could resist; and whose abilities and patriotism had not only saved his country from the most formidable invasion recorded in history, and which was principally directed against Athens, but amidst the terrors of this invasion, the treachery of false friends, and the violence of open enemies, had so eminently contributed to raise his republic to the first rank in the Grecian confederacy. Yet such, on the one hand, was the effect of that envy which, in republics, always accompanies excellence; and such, on the other, the influence of Spartan bribery and intrigues, that Themistocles was banished by the ostracism, a punishment inflicted on men whose aspiring ambition seemed dangerous to freedom, which required not the proof of any particular delinquency, and which had effect only during a term of years. [26]

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His death and character. Olymp. lxxvi. 4. A. C. 475

It is probable, that the illustrious exile would have been recalled before the expiration of the appointed time; but the persecution of Sparta allowed not his countrymen leisure to repent of their severity. Having punished Pausanias, they acquainted the Athenians, "That from the papers of this notorious traitor, complete evidence appeared of the guilt of Themistocles; that it was not sufficient, therefore, to have expelled him for a few years from Athens, by an indulgent decree, which the assembly might revoke at pleasure; that crimes against the general con-

[26] Diodor. p. 445. & seq. Plut. ibid.

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federacy of Greece ought to be judged by the Amphictyonic council, and punished by death, or perpetual banishment." The Athenians shamefully complied with this demand. It appeared, indeed, that Themistocles had corresponded with Pausanias, and been privy to his designs; but he persisted in affirming that he never had approved them. The rivalship and enmity subsisting between Sparta and Argos, had induced him to choose the latter as the place of his retreat. There he received the news of his condemnation; after which, not thinking himself secure in any city of Peloponnesus, he sailed to Corcyra. But his enemies still continuing to persecute him, he fled to the opposite coast of Epirus, and sought refuge among the barbarous Molossians. Soon afterwards he escaped into Persia, where his wonderful versatility of genius, in acquiring the language and manners of that country, recommended him to the new King Artaxerxes, who had lately succeeded the unfortunate invader of Greece. The suspicion of treason throws a dark shade on the eminent lustre of his abilities; nor does the disinterestedness of his private character tend to remove the imputation. Though he carried with him to Persia his most valuable effects, yet the estimate of the property which he left behind in Athens, amounted to an hundred talents (above twenty thousand pounds sterling), an immense sum, when estimated by the value of money in that age. The whole was confiscated to the exchequer; and the eagerness of the populace to seize this rich booty, serves to ex-

Olymp. lxxvii. 1. A C. 479.

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plain the alacrity with which all parties concurred in his destruction. A report prevailed in Greece, that Themistocles could never forgive the ingratitude of the Athenians, which he had determined to revenge at the head of a powerful army, raised by Artaxerxes. But perceiving the unexampled success of Cimon on the Asiatic coast, he despaired of being able to accomplish his design; and in a melancholy hour, ended his life by poison at the age of sixty-five, in Magnesia, a town of Lydia, which had been bestowed on him by the liberality of the Persian monarch.[27]

Death of Aristides. Olymp. lxxvii. 2. A. C. 471.

It is worthy of observation, that the three great commanders who had resisted and disgraced the arms of Xerxes, quitted the scene almost at the same time. While Pausanias and Themistocles suffered the punishment of their real or pretended crimes, Aristides died of old age, universally regretted by the affectionate admiration of his country. He, who had long managed the common treasury of Greece, left not a sufficient sum to defray the expence of his funeral. His son Lysimachus received a present of three hundred pounds from the public, to enable him to pursue and finish his education. His daughters were maintained and portioned at the expence of the treasury. This honourable poverty well corresponded with the manly elevation of his character, whose pure and unsullied splendour, in the opinion of a good judge of merit[28], far eclipses the

His character.

[27] Plut. & Nepos in Themist. Diodor. l. xi. c. liv—lix. Thucyd. i. 135. & seq.

[28] Plato apud Plutarch. in Aristid.

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doubtful fame of his dazzling, but unfortunate rival.

Elevation of Cimon to the command.

By the death of Aristides, the conduct of the Persian war devolved on his colleague, Cimon, who united the integrity of that great man to the valour of Miltiades and the decisive boldness of Themistocles. But as he felt an ambition for eminence which disdains bare imitation, he not only reflected the most distinguished excellencies of his predecessors, but improved and adorned them by an elegant liberality of manners, an indulgent humanity, and candid condescension; virtues which long secured him the affections of his fellow-citizens, while his military talents and authority, always directed by moderation and justice, maintained an absolute ascendant over the allies of the republic. His first operations were employed against the coast of Thrace, which the taking of Byzantium seemed to render an easy conquest. The only places in that country fitted to make an obstinate resistance were the towns of Eion and Amphipolis, both situate on the river Strymon; the former near its junction with the Strymonic gulph; the latter more remote from the shore, but entirely surrounded by an arm of the gulph, and the principal branches of that copious river. Amphipolis, however, was taken, and planted by a numerous colony of Athenians. But Eion still opposed a vigorous resistance; Boges, the Persian governor, having determined rather to perish than surrender. After long baffling the efforts of the besiegers, by such persevering courage and activity as none

He reduces the coast of Thrace. Olymp. lxxvii. 2. A. C. 471.

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of his countrymen had displayed in the course of the war, this fierce Barbarian was at length not tamed, but exasperated by hunger. His companions and attendants, equally desperate with their leader, followed his intrepid example; and mounting the ramparts with one accord, threw into the middle stream of the Strymon, their gold, silver, and other precious effects. After thus attesting their implacable hatred to the assailants, they calmly descended, lighted a funeral pile, butchered their wives and children, and again mounting the walls, precipitated themselves with fury into the thickest of the flames.[20]

Pursues the enemy into Asia. Olymp. lxxvii. 3. A. C. 470.

With this signal act of despair ended the Persian dominion over the coast of Europe, which finally submitted to the victorious arms of Cimon; a general, who knew alike how to conquer, and how to use the victory. The Athenians were eager to prolong the authority of a man, who seemed ambitious to acquire wealth by valour, only that by wealth he might purchase the public esteem; and whose affable kindness, and winning liberality, continually increased his fame and his influence both at home and abroad. The reinforcements with which he was speedily furnished by the republic, enabled him to pursue the enemy into Asia, without allowing them time to breathe, or recover strength, after their repeated defeats. The intermediate islands ambitiously courted his protection and friendship; and *their* feeble aid, together with the more powerful assistance of the Ionian coast, speedily

[20] Plut. in Cimon. Diodor. l. xi.

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increased his fleet to the number of three hundred sail.

His rapid success in Caria and Lycia.

With this formidable armament he stretched towards the coast of Caria, where his approach served for the signal of liberty to the numerous Greek cities in that rich province. Seconded by the ardour of the natives, he successively besieged and reduced the walled towns and fortresses, several of which were defended with powerful garrisons; and, in the course of a few months, totally expelled the Persians from all their strong-holds in Caria. The victorious armament then proceeded eastward to Lycia, and received the submission of that valuable coast.

He takes Phaselis.

The citizens of Phaselis alone, defended by strong walls, and a numerous garrison, refused to admit the Grecian fleet, or to betray their Persian master. Their resistance was the more formidable, because their ancient connection with the Chians, who actually served under the colours of Cimon, enabled them to enter into a treacherous correspondence with the enemy. After other means of intercourse had been cut off, the Chians still shot arrows over the walls, and thus conveyed intelligence into the place of all the measures adopted by the assailants. Wherever the attack was made, the townsmen and garrison were prepared to resist; the besiegers were long baffled in all their attempts; but the perseverance of Cimon finally overcame the obstinacy of his enemies. Their vigorous resistance was not distinguished by any memorable punishment; the mediation of the Chians, who were justly esteemed

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among the best sailors in the Athenian fleet, easily prevailing on the lenity of Cimon to grant them a capitulation, on condition that they immediately paid ten talents, and augmented the Grecian armament by their whole naval strength.[30] CHAP. XII.

The distracted state of Persia, the intrigues of the court, the discord of the palace, and the civil wars which raised to the throne of Xerxes his third son Artaxerxes, distinguished by the epithet of Longimanus, prevented that vast but unwieldy empire from making any vigorous effort to resist the European invasion. But after Artaxerxes had at length crushed the unfortunate ambition of his competitors, and acquired firm possession of the reins of government, which he continued to hold for half a century[31], he naturally concerted proper measures to defend his remaining dominions in Asia Minor. Having re-established the Persian authority in the isle of Cyprus, he considered that Pamphylia, being the next province to Lycia, would probably receive a speedy visit from the victorious Greeks. That he might meet them there with becoming vigour, he assembled a powerful army on the fertile banks of the Eurymedon. A fleet likewise, of four hundred sail, was collected, chiefly from Cilicia and Phœnicia, and was commanded to rendezvous near the mouth of that river. The Persians prepare for defence: A. C. 473—425.

[30] Plut. & Diodor. ibid.

[31] Compare Thucydid. l. i. c. cxxxvii. and Usher Chronol. See also Petav. de Doctrin. Templ. l. x. c. xxv. who endeavours to reconcile the chronological differences between Thucydides and Plutarch in Themist.

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Are defeated at sea. Olymp lxxvii. 3. A. C. 470.

The Greeks, conducted by the activity of Cimon, delayed not to undertake the enterprize which the prudence of Artaxerxes had foreseen. Their fleet, amounting to two hundred and fifty gallies, fell in with the Persian squadrons off the coast of Cyprus. The Barbarians, vainly confident in their superior numbers, did not decline the engagement, which was obstinate, fierce, and bloody. Many of their ships were sunk; an hundred were taken; the rest fled in disorder towards the shore of Cyprus; but, being speedily pursued by a powerful detachment of the Grecian fleet, were abandoned, by the terror of their crews, to the victors; and thus the mighty preparations, which the Great King had raised with such flattering hopes, strengthened in one day, with about three hundred sail, the hostile navy of Greece. [32]

Cimon's valour and conduct.

The vigorous mind of Cimon, instead of being intoxicated with this flow of prosperity, was less elevated with good fortune, than solicitous to improve it. The captured vessels contained above twenty thousand Persians. The soldiers encamped on the Eurymedon were still ignorant of the sea-fight. These circumstances instantly suggested to the quick discernment of Cimon a stratagem for surprising the Persian camp, which was executed on the evening of the same glorious day with admirable success. The prisoners were stripped of their eastern attire; the bravest of the Greeks condescended to assume the tiara and scy-

[32] Thucydid. Plut. Diodor. ibid.

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mitar, and thus disguised, embarked in the Persian ships, and sailed up the river Eurymedon with a favourable gale. The unsuspecting Barbarians received them with open arms into their camp, as their long-expected companions. But the Greeks had no sooner been admitted within the gates, than on a given signal at once drawing their swords, they attacked, with the concert of disciplined valour, the defenceless security of their now astonished and trembling adversaries. Before the Persians recovered from their surprise, Cimon had advanced to the tent of their general. Consternation and despair seized this numerous but unwarlike host. The few who were least overcome by the impressions of fear and amazement, betook themselves to flight; a panic terror suspended the powers of the rest; they remained, and fell, unarmed and unresisting, by the hands of an unknown enemy.

Gains the decisive victory of Eurymedon.

The rich spoils of the Barbarian camp rewarded the enterprise and celerity of the Greeks, who, loaded with wealth and glory, returned home during winter, and piously dedicated to Apollo a tenth of the plunder acquired by these ever-memorable achievements. A considerable portion of the remainder was employed (as mentioned above) in strengthening the fortifications of Athens. Agreeably to the Grecian custom, the general was entitled to a valuable share. Cimon received it as a testimony of the public esteem, and expended it for the public use; embellishing Athens, his beloved birth-place, with

The spoil, how employed.

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shady walks, gardens, porticoes, schools of exercise, and other works of general pleasure and utility.[33]

The Athenians prosecute the war; Olymp. lxxvii. 4. A. C. 469.

After these decisive victories, the Greeks, headed by the Athenians, carried on the war during twenty-one years, rather for plunder than glory. The manifest superiority which they enjoyed on all the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, might have rendered their maritime allies sufficiently secure. But the people of Athens, whose councils began about this time to be governed by the magnanimous ambition and profound policy of Pericles, had the address to persuade their confederates that naval preparations and enterprises were still as necessary as ever.

take money instead of ships from the allies;

At length, however, most of those scattered islands and sea-ports, which ranged under the colours of Athens, grew weary of perpetual hostilities, of which *they* shared the toil and the danger, while their lofty leaders alone reaped the advantage and the glory, and became continually more anxious to enjoy the benefits of public peace and the undisturbed comforts of domestic tranquillity. The Athenians availed themselves of this disposition, to engage such states as appeared most backward in raising their contingents for the common armament, to compound for personal service on shipboard, by an annual supply of money, which might enable Athens continually to keep in readiness a fleet of observation, to watch and check the motions of the common

[33] Idem, ibid. & Nepos in Cimon. & Thucydid. l. i.

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enemy. This, at first voluntary, contribution soon amounted to the value of an hundred thousand pounds. It was gradually augmented; and, at length, raised by Pericles to three times the original sum[34]; an immense income, considering that the proportional value of money to labour was then ten times higher than at present; and considering also the very limited revenues of the greatest monarchs of antiquity; since, from all the various provinces of the Persian empire, scarcely four millions sterling entered the royal treasury.[35]

prepare to undertake an expedition against Cyprus. Olymp. lxxvii. 3. A. C. 466.

In their eastern expeditions, the Greeks had an opportunity of visiting the large and beautiful island of Cyprus, which, though delivered by their valour from *some* Persian garrisons, either still continued, or again became, subject to that empire. The striking advantages[36] of a delightful territory, four hundred miles in circumference, producing in great abundance wine, oil, with the most delicious fruits, and deemed invaluable in ancient times on account of its rich mines of brass, naturally tempted the ambition of an enterprising nation. The conquest of Cyprus was still farther recommended to the Athenians, as the sea-coast had been peopled by a Grecian colony under the heroic Teucer, who built there a city called Salamis, from the name of his native

[34] Thucyd. ibid. & Plut. in Pericl.

[35] Herodot. iii. 95. In modern times the precious metals have so much increased in quantity and diminished in value, that in 1660 the revenue of Hindoostan amounted to thirty-two millions sterling.

[36] Strabo, p. 648.

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country[37], which, from the earliest antiquity, had been regarded as a dependence of Attica. The Grecian inhabitants of Cyprus had hitherto attained neither power nor splendour; their settlements had been successively reduced by the Phœnicians and the Great King; and they actually languished in a condition of debility which threatened their total ruin.[38] Honour prompted the Athenians to relieve their distressed brethren; interest incited them to acquire possession of a valuable island. With two hundred ships of war they prepared to undertake this important enterprise, when an object still more dazzling gave a new direction to their arms.

Diverted from that measureby the revolt of Egypt. Olymp. lxxviii. 4. A. C. 463.

Amidst the troubles which attended the establishment of Artaxerxes on the Persian throne, the Egyptians sought an opportunity to withdraw themselves from the yoke of a nation whose tyranny they had long felt and lamented. A leader only was wanting to head the rebellion. This also was at length discovered in Inarus, a bold Lybian chief, to whose standard the malcontents assembling from all quarters, gradually grew into an army, which attacked and defeated the Persian mercenaries, expelled the garrisons, banished or put to death the governors and officers of the revenue, and traversing the kingdom without controul or resistance, every where proclaimed the Egyptians, a free and independent nation. Nor was this the capricious revolt of short-sighted Barbarians. Inarus maintained his conquest with valour and

[37] Isocrat. in Evagor. [38] Isocrat. ibid.

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policy; and in order to strengthen his interest by foreign alliance, dispatched an embassy to Athens, craving the assistance of that victorious republic against its most odious and inveterate enemy.[39]

The Athenian armament sails thither: Olymp. lxxix. 2. A. C. 465.

The negociation was successful; the Athenians burned with desire to share the spoils of Persia, and commanded the ships, destined for Cyprus, to sail to Egypt. They had scarcely arrived in that kingdom, when a Persian army of three hundred thousand men, commmanded by Achæmenes, encamped on the banks of the Nile. A battle speedily ensued, in which the insurgents obtained a complete victory, chiefly through the valour and discipline of their Grecian auxiliaries. The vanquished sought refuge within the walls of Memphis; that capital was invested; and after becoming masters of two divisions of the city, the Athenians pushed with vigour the siege of the third, called, from the colour of its fortifications, the White Wall. Artaxerxes, meanwhile, neglected no possible effort for breaking, or eluding, a tempest, that threatened to dismember his dominions. While Persian nobles of distinction conveyed immense sums of gold and silver into Greece, to rouse, by seasonable bribes, the hostility of rival states against the audacity of Athens, a new army was collected, still more numerous than the former, and entrusted to Megabazus, the bravest general in the East. Such, at least, he was deemed by

is victorious;

besieges Memphis.

[39] Thucydid. l. i. & Diodor. l. xi. p. 279.

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his countrymen; yet we cannot perceive any very illustrious merit in forcing the Greeks to raise the siege of Memphis, the soldiers being already worn out by the fatigues of hard service, and probably enfeebled by diseases in a far distant climate, much differing from their own.

Misfortunes of the Athenians in Egypt. Olymp. lxxx. 4. A. C. 467.

Megabazus, however, had the glory of first turning against the Greeks that current of success which had run for many years so strongly in their favour. They and the revolted Egyptians were now besieged, in their turn, in a small island of the Nile called Prosopis, along the coast of which the Athenians had anchored their ships. By diverting the course of the river, Megabazus left them on dry land. The operation so much confounded the Egyptians, that they immediately laid down their arms: but their wonted magnanimity did not forsake the Greeks: with their own hands they set fire to their fleet, and exhorting each other to suffer nothing unworthy of their former fame, determined, with one accord, to resist the assailants, and, although they could not expect victory, to purchase an honourable tomb. Megabazus, intimidated by their countenance and resolution, and unwilling to expose his men to the efforts of a dangerous despair, granted them a capitulation, and what seems more extraordinary in a Persian commander, allowed them to retire in safety. They endeavoured to penetrate through Lybia to the Grecian colonies in Cyrenaica, from which they hoped to be transported by sea to their native country. But the greater part perished through fatigue or disease

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in the inhospitable deserts of Africa, and only a miserable remnant of men, whose memory deserved a better fate, revisited the shores of Greece. To complete the disaster, a reinforcement of sixty ships, which the Athenians had sent to Egypt, was attacked, surrounded, and totally destroyed by the Phœnicians.[40]

The Athenians renew their designs against Cyprus. Olymp. lxxxii. 3. A. C. 450.

These repeated misfortunes, together with the growing troubles in Greece, which we shall speedily have occasion to describe, prevented the Athenians, during seven years, from resuming their design against Cyprus. A fleet of two hundred sail was at length entrusted to Cimon, who enjoyed a prosperous voyage to the Cyprian coast. The towns of Malos and Citium opposed a feeble resistance, and the singular humanity with which Cimon treated his prisoners, would have facilitated more important conquests: but the Phœnician and Sicilian fleets had again put to sea, and Cimon wisely determined to attack them as they approached the island, rather than wait their arrival, his countrymen being superior to their enemies, still more in naval than in military prowess. In the battle which soon followed, he took above an hundred gallies; the number of those sunk or destroyed is unknown; the remainder fled to the coast of Cilicia, in hopes of protection from the great army of Megabazus, encamped in that province; but this slow unwieldy body was unable to afford them any seasonable or effectual relief. The Greeks, having

Their success in that island.

[40] Isocrat. de Pace & Panegyr. & Thucydid. & Diodor. ibid.

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pursued them on shore, totally destroyed *them*, as well as the Persian detachments which came to their succour, and returned loaded with spoil to Cyprus. The Athenian general then prepared to form the siege of Salamis, which, though defended by a numerous Persian garrison, and well provided with all the necessaries of defence, must have soon yielded to his skill and valour, had not sickness, in consequence of a wound received before the walls of Citium, prevented him from exerting his usual activity.

The Persian monarch solicits peace. Olymp. lxxxii. 4. A. C. 449.

Meanwhile Artaxerxes, who perceived that the acquisition of Salamis would naturally draw after it the conquest of the whole island, and who had been continually disappointed in expecting to prepare fleets and armies able to contend with the Athenians, eagerly solicited peace from that people, almost on their own terms. His ambassadors were favourably heard in the Athenian assembly by those who were more solicitous about confirming their usurpations over their allies and colonies, than ambitious of extending their Asiatic conquests. Cimon, who invariably maintained the contrary system, was now no more. A peace, therefore, was concluded on the following conditions[41]: That all the Greek colonies in Lower Asia should be declared independent of the Persian empire; that the armies of the Great King should not approach within three days' journey of the western coast; and that no Persian vessel should appear between the Cyanean rocks and the Chelidonian isles, that is, in the wide extent

Motives which determined the Athenians to compliance.

[41] Thucydid. Plutarch. Diodor. Isocrat. &c.

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of the Ægæan and Mediterranean seas, between the northern extremity of the Thracian Bosphorus and the south-eastern promontory of Lycia. On such terms the Athenians and their allies stipulated to withdraw their armament from Cyprus, and to abstain thenceforward from molesting the territories of the King of Persia.[42] Such was the conclusion of this memorable war, which, since the burning of Sardis, the first decisive act of hostility, had been carried on, with little intermission, during fifty-one years. The same magnanimous republic, which first ventured to oppose the pretensions of Persia, dictated to that haughty empire the most humiliating conditions of peace; an important and illustrious æra in Grecian history, which was often celebrated with pompous panegyric during the declining ages of Athenian glory.

Obstacles to a general or lasting confederacy in Greece.

Although, for reasons which will be explained hereafter, peace was alike necessary to both parties, yet the reader, who feels a warm interest in the cause of civilization and humanity, cannot but regret that, after disgracing the arms of Persia, and breaking the power of Carthage, the Greeks had not combined in one powerful exertion, and extended their victories and their improvements over the ancient world. But the internal defects in her political constitution, which stunted the growth of Greece, and prevented her manhood and maturity from corresponding to the blooming vigour of her youth, rendered impossible this most desirable union,

[42] Isocrat. Panegyr.

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which, could it have taken place, would probably have left little room for the brilliant conquests of Alexander, or the more permanent glory of the Roman arms. Instead of these imagined trophies, the subsequent history of Greece exhibits a melancholy picture of intestine discord.

Its subsequent history peculiarly interesting.

During an hundred and eleven years, which elapsed between the glorious peace with Persia, in which the Athenians, at the head of their allies, seemed for ever to have repressed the ambition of that aspiring power, and the fatal defeat at Cheronæa, in which the same people, with their unfortunate auxiliaries, submitted to the valour and activity of Philip, Greece, with short variations of domestic quiet and foreign hostility, carried on bloody wars, and obtained destructive victories, in which her own citizens, not the enemies of the confederacy, were the unhappy objects of her inglorious triumph. Yet the transactions of this distracted and miserable period, however immaterial in the history of empire, are peculiarly interesting in the still more instructive history of human nature. A confederacy of soldiers and freemen, extending their dominion over ignorant savages, or effeminate slaves, must continually exhibit the unequal combat of power, courage, and conduct on the one side, against weakness, ignorance, and timidity on the other. But amidst the domestic dissensions of Greece, the advantages of the contending parties were nicely balanced and accurately adjusted. Force was resisted by force, valour opposed by valour, and art encountered or eluded by similar address. The active powers of man, excited by emulation,

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inflamed by opposition, nourished by interest, and at once strengthened and elevated by a sense of personal honour and the hope of immortal fame, operated in every direction with awakened energy, and were displayed in the boldest exertions of the voice and arm. In every field where glory might be won, men recognised the proper objects of their ambition, and aspired to the highest honours of their kind; and although the prizes were often small, and the victory always indecisive, yet the pertinacious efforts of the combatants (great beyond example, and almost beyond belief) furnish the most interesting spectacle that history can present to the rational wonder of posterity.

Sparta, Thebes, and Argos, hostile to Athens.

The powerful cities of Sparta, Thebes, and Argos, which had long rivalled Athens and each other, could not behold, without much dissatisfaction and anxiety, the rapid growth of a republic which already eclipsed their splendour, and might some time endanger their safety. The Spartans had particular causes of disgust. The glorious victories of Cimon made them deeply regret that *they*, who had shared the first and severest toils of the war, had too hastily withdrawn from a field of action that afforded so many laurels. They were provoked at being denied the command of the maritime allies, and not less offended at being over-reached by Themistocles. All these reasons had determined them, above twenty years before the peace with Persia, to make war on the Athenians, expecting to be seconded in this design by the fears of the

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weak, and the jealousy of the more powerful states, on both sides the Corinthian isthmus. But their animosity, before it broke out into action, was diverted by a calamity equally sudden and unforeseen. In the year four hundred and sixty-nine before Christ, Sparta was overwhelmed by an earthquake.[48] Taygetus and the neighbouring mountains were shaken to the foundation, and twenty thousand Lacedæmonian citizens or subjects perished in this dreadful disaster. But, amidst the ruins of Sparta, one description of men beheld the public misfortunes not only without sympathy, but with a secret satisfaction.

Earthquake in Sparta; Olymp. lxxvii. 4. A. C. 469.

followed by the revolt of the Helots and Messenians;

The oppressed Spartan slaves, known by the appellations of Helots and Messenians, assembled in crowds from the villages in which they were cantoned, and took measures for delivering themselves, during the cruelty of the elements, from the not less inexorable cruelty of their unfeeling tyrants. The prudent dispositions of King Archidamus, who, foreseeing the revolt, had summoned the citizens to arms, prevented them from getting immediate possession of the capital; but they rendered themselves masters of the ancient and strong fortress Ithomé, from which they continued many years to infest the Lacedæmonian territories. The Spartans in vain exerted their utmost endeavours to expel this dangerous intestine enemy; and in the third year of the war (for this revolt is dignified in history by the name of the Third Messenian War), they had recourse to the Athenians, who, of all the Greeks, were

[48] Thucydid. lib. i. cap. 100. & seq. Diodor. lib. xi. cap. 63.

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deemed the most skilful in sieges. The Athenians, either not sufficiently acquainted with the secret hostility of Sparta, or willing to dissemble their knowledge of it, as they were then totally bent on other projects and enterprises, sent them the required assistance. The besiegers, however, met with so little success, that the Spartans dismissed their Athenian auxiliaries, on pretence indeed that their help was no longer necessary; but, in reality, from a suspicion that they favoured the interest of the rebels; and, as they retained the troops of all the other allies, the Athenians were justly provoked by this instance of distrust.[44] Meanwhile the inhabitants of Pisa, who, for a reason that will be immediately explained, were highly incensed against Sparta, gave vigorous assistance to the besieged.

part of whom are settled in Naupactus by the Athenians. Olymp. lxxx. 2. A. C. 459.

The place thus held out ten years: many sallies were made, several battles were fought with the fury that might be expected from the cruelty of tyrants chastising the insolence of slaves. Both parties must have been reduced to extremity, since the Helots and Messenians, though obliged to surrender the place, obtained from the weakness, a condition which they would have vainly solicited from the mercy, of Sparta, "that they should be allowed, with their wives, children, and effects, to depart, unmolested, from the Peloponnesus." The Athenians, deeply resenting the affront of suspected fidelity, determined to mortify the Spartans by kindly receiving these needy fugitives, whom they finally established in

[44] Thucydid. l. i. cap. 101.

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Naupactus, a sea-port on the Crissean gulph, which their arms had recently wrested from the Locri Ozolæ, a cruel barbarous people, whose savage manners and rapacity disgraced their Grecian extraction. The Helots and Messenians repaid, by signal gratitude, the humane protection of Athens. During the long course of the Peloponnesian war, while their neighbours on every side espoused the opposite interest, the inhabitants of Naupactus alone invariably exerted themselves, with zeal and vigour, in defence of the declining power of their magnanimous confederate and ancient benefactor.

Their signal gratitude.

The war between the Elians and Pisans.

The cause above alluded to, which had incensed the Pisans against Sparta, dated beyond a century.[45] That people had long contended with Elis, the capital of their province, for the right of superintending the Olympic games. The Spartans enabled the Eleans to prevail in the contest, who continued without opposition to direct that august solemnity, until the earthquake and subsequent calamities of Sparta emboldened the insolent and wealthy Pisans to renew their pretensions.[46] Their attempts, however, to maintain this bold claim, especially after the removal of the Helots and Messenians, appear to have been alike feeble and unfortunate. Pisa was taken, plundered, and so thoroughly demolished that not a vestige, and scarcely the name, remained.

Sack of Pisa. Olymp. lxxi. 1. A. C. 456.

The temple of Olympian Jupiter.

With the valuable booty acquired in this warfare, the Eleans executed a memorable undertaking; having, in the course of ten years[47], en-

[45] Pausanias, l. vi. c. 22. [46] Strabo, l. viii. p. 545.

[47] Between the years 456 and 446, A. C.

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larged and adorned the temple of Olympian Jupiter, and erected the celebrated statue of that divinity; a work which no subsequent age could ever rival, and whose sublimity is said to have increased and fortified the popular [47] superstition. This famous temple was of the Doric order, encircled with a colonnade, and built of the stone of the country resembling Parian marble. From the area, or ground, to the decoration over the gate, it reached sixty-eight feet in height; it was ninety-five feet broad, and two hundred and thirty long: thus falling short of the greatest modern temples in magnitude, as much as it exceeded them in beauty and richness of material. It was covered with Pentelican marble, cut in the form of brick tiles. At each extremity of the roof stood a gilded vase; in the middle a golden victory; below which was a shield embossed with a Medusa's head, likewise of gold. Pelops and Oenomaus were represented, on the pediment, ready to begin the chariot-race before very illustrious spectators, since Jupiter himself was of the number. The vault was adorned with the battle of the Centaurs and Lapithæ. The labours of Hercules distinguished the principal entrance. [49]

After passing the brass gates, you discovered Iphitus crowned by his spouse [50] Echecheiria; Phidias's statue of that divinity.

[47] Aliquid receptæ religioni adjecisse fertur. PLIN.

[49] Pausan. in Eliac. p. 303. & seq.

[50] Γυνη means a married woman: perhaps Echecheiria, *war-ceasing*, was an allegorical personage; but Greek names denoting qualities or functions, were often imposed, as we have seen, on real persons.

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CHAP. XII. from thence you proceeded, through a noble portico, to the majestic creation of Phidias, the Athenian, which formed the principal ornament of the temple, and of Greece. The god was sitting on a throne, and being sixty feet high, touched the roof with his head; and threatened, if he raised himself, to shake in pieces that noble edifice, which, lofty and spacious as it was, still appeared unworthy to contain him. This vast colossus was composed of gold, taken in the sack of Pisa, and of ivory, then almost as precious as gold, which was brought from the East by Athenian merchantmen. The god had an enamelled crown of olive on his head, an image of victory in his right hand, a burnished sceptre in his left. His robes and sandals were variegated with golden flowers and animals. The throne was made of ivory and ebony, inlaid with precious stones. The feet which supported it, as well as the fillets which joined them, were adorned with innumerable figures; among which you perceived the Theban children torn by sphinxes, together with Apollo and Diana wreaking revenge on the beautiful and once flourishing family of Niobé. Upon the most conspicuous part of the throne which met the eye in entering, you beheld eight statues, representing the gymnastic exercises; and the beautiful figure, whose head was encircled with a wreath, resembled young Pantarces, the favourite scholar of Phidias, who, in the contest of boys, had recently gained the Olympic prize. Besides the four feet, mentioned above, the throne was supported by four pillars, placed between them, and painted by Panænus, the brother of

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Phidias. There that admirable artist had delineated the Hesperides guarding the golden apples: Atlas painfully sustaining the heavens, with Hercules ready to assist him; Salamine with naval ornaments in her hand; and Achilles supporting the beautiful expiring Penthesilea. CHAP. XII.

The Olympic temple compared with other sacred edifices in Greece.

It would be tedious to describe the remaining ornaments of this celebrated statue, and still more of the sacred edifice itself: yet the temple of Olympia was much inferior in size to that of Ceres and Proserpine, at Eleusis, in Attica. The latter was built by Ictinus, the contemporary and rival of Phidias; and sufficiently capacious, we are told, to contain thirty thousand [50] persons. This edifice was also of the Doric order; that of Diana at Ephesus, and of Apollo at Miletus, were both of the Ionic; and the celebrated temple of Jupiter at Athens, begun by Pisistratus, and enlarged by Pericles, was finished in the Corinthian style, by Antiochus Epiphanes, King of Syria. These four temples were the richest and most beautiful in the world, and long regarded as models of the three Grecian orders of architecture. [51]

Intestine dissensions in Argolis, Olymp. lxxviii. 1. A. C. 468.

While the earthquake and the servile war confined within a domestic sphere the activity of Sparta, Argos, the second republic of the Peloponnesus, and long the most considerable principality in that peninsula, underwent such revolutions and misfortunes, as left her neither inclination nor power to oppose the Athenian greatness. Ever rivals and enemies of Sparta,

[50] Strabo, l. ix. p. 395.

[51] Vitruvius, l. vii.

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the Argives had jealously declined the danger and glory of the Persian war, to the success of which their adversaries had so eminently contributed. This ungenerous dereliction passed not unpunished. As deserters of the common cause, the Argives incurred the hatred and contempt of their public-spirited neighbours. Mycnæa, once the proud residence of royal Agamemnon, Epidaurus and Træzené, which formed respectively the greatest strength and brightest ornament of the Argive territory, threw off the yoke of a capital, whose folly or baseness rendered her unworthy to govern them. Sicyon, Nauplia, Heliæa, and other towns of less note, which were scattered at small distances over the face of that delightful province, obeyed the summons to liberty, and assumed independence. The rebels (for as such they were treated by the indignant magistrates of Argos) strengthened themselves by foreign alliance, and continued thenceforth to disdain the authority of their ancient metropolis and sovereign. At the commencement of the Peloponnesian war, they formed a respectable portion of the Lacedæmonian confederacy; while Argos alone, of all the cities in the Peloponnesus, openly espoused the cause of the Athenians.

Destruction of Mycenæ.

The ancient city of Mycenæ, which had first sounded the trumpet of sedition, was the only victim of Argive resentment. The Argives seized a favourable opportunity, while the allies and adherents of Mycenæ were occupied with their domestic concerns, to lead their whole forces

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against the place; and having taken it by storm, they decimated the inhabitants, and demolished not only the walls, but the town[52] itself, which was never afterwards rebuilt.

The inferior cities in Bœotia reject the authority of Thebes.

The desultory transactions of so many states and cities as composed the name and nation of Greece, must appear a continual maze of perplexity and confusion, unless we carefully follow the threads which should direct us in this intricate, yet not inextricable, labyrinth. But if we seriously apply ourselves to investigate the hidden causes of events, and to trace revolutions to their source, we shall be surprised by the agreeable discovery, that the history of this celebrated people is not entirely that mass of disorder which it appears on a superficial survey. The same causes which repressed the activity, and humbled the pride of Argos, operated alike fatally on Thebes, the second republic beyond the isthmus, and the only one that ever aspired to rival the power of Athens. The Thebans, for similar, or more odious reasons, than those which had restrained the Argives, had also withheld their assistance in the Persian war; and by this mean selfishness or treachery had justly provoked the indignation of the subordinate cities of Bœotia. Not only Thespiæ and Platæa, which had ever borne with impatience the Theban yoke, but the sea-ports of Aulis, Anthemon, and Larymna; Aschra, the beloved habitation of old Hesiod; Coronea, overshadowed by mount Helicon, a favourite seat of the Muses; Lebadea, famous for

[52] Diodor. l. xi. p 276.

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its oracle of Trophonius; Delium and Alalkomené, respectively sacred to Apollo and Minerva, together with Leuctra and Chæronæa, the destined scenes of immortal victories; all these cities successively rejected the jurisdiction and sovereignty of Thebes, which, during the invasion of Xerxes, had so shamefully betrayed the common interest and thwarted the general impulse of the nation.[53]

The Thebans obtain assistance from Sparta. Olymp. lxxx. 2. A. C. 459.

During several years, the Thebans patiently yielded to a storm, which they found it impossible to resist. But when the Spartans began to breathe after the recovery of Ithomé, and had made a successful expedition against the Phocians, in defence of their kinsmen in Doris, the Thebans warmly solicited them to take part in their domestic quarrels, and to enable them to regain their ascendant in Bœotia; with assurance that they would employ the first moments of returning vigour to oppose the growing pretensions of the Athenians. This proposal was accepted, not only by the resentment, but by the policy of the Spartan senate, who perceived that it equally concerned their interest, that the neighbouring city of Argos should lose her jurisdiction over Argolis; and that Thebes, the neighbour and rival of Athens, should recover her authority in Bœotia.

Wise policy of that state.

Athens enables the Bœotians to maintain their

They were applying themselves with vigour and success to effect this salutary purpose, when the active vigilance of Athens dispatched an army, fifteen thousand strong, to maintain the

[53] Diodor. l. xi. p. 283, & seq. & Thucydid. l. i. p. 273.

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independence of Bœotia. The valour and conduct of Myronides, the Athenian general, obtained a decisive victory near the walls of Tanagra, one of the few places in the province which had preserved its fidelity to the capital. This memorable battle, which no ancient writer has thought proper to describe, although it is compared to the glorious trophies of Marathon and Platæa[54], confirmed the liberty of Bœotia; nor could the Thebans, notwithstanding their partial success against several of the revolted cities, recover their authority in that province, until, about fourscore years afterwards, they emerged into sudden splendour under the conduct of their heroic Epaminondas.

independence. A. C. 458. —456.

The ambitious policy of Pericles, which will be fully explained in the sequel, was eager to profit by every favourable turn of fortune. He took care to place Athenian garrisons in several Bœotian fortresses; he made the neighbouring republics of Corinth and Megara feel and acknowledge the supremacy of Athens; and after sending Tolmidas, a commander endued rather with an impetuous than well-regulated courage, to ravage the coast of the Peloponnesus, he sailed thither next year in person, and made the Lacedæmonians and their allies deeply regret, that they had too soon discovered their animosity against a republic, alike able to protect its friends and take vengeance on its enemies. The measures of this daring leader were actually uncontrouled by any opposition, since his eloquence

Ambitious measures of Athens.

A. C. 455.

A. C. 454.

[54] Diodor. l. xi. p. 284.

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had prevailed over the innocence and merit of Cimon, and procured the banishment of that illustrious commander. But Cimon was recalled in two years; and his return was signalised by a suspension of arms in Greece, which that real patriot had been as zealous to promote, as he was ambitious to pursue his Asiatic triumphs.

A. C. 447. This treaty, however, was soon broken; but an ill-concerted and unfortunate enterprise against Thebes (disapproved by Pericles himself), in which the rash Tolmidas lost his army and his life, made the Athenians again listen to terms of

A. C. 445. accommodation. They agreed to withdraw their garrisons from Boeotia; to disavow all pretensions against Corinth and Megara, pretensions which had no other effect than to exasperate those little republics against their usurping neighbour; and, on complying with these conditions, the Athenians recovered their citizens made captive in Boeotia, through the misconduct of Tolmidas.[55]

The truce of thirty years. Olymp. lxxxiii. 4. A. C. 445.

This was the famous truce of thirty years concluded in the fourteenth year preceding the Peloponnesian war. The former treaty had been limited to a much shorter period; for it is worthy of observation, that even in their agreements of peace, the Greeks discovered that perpetual propensity to war, which was the unhappy effect of their political institutions.[56]

Motives of the Athenians for

The terms of this accommodation, seemingly little favourable to the interest of Athens, were

[55] Diodor. l. xii. p. 293. Thucydid. l. i. p. 71. & seq.
[56] Idem, p. 74.

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dictated, however, rather by the ambition than the equity of that republic; a conclusion that evidently results from examining the third series of events, which (as observed above) completes the history of this memorable period. Amidst the foreign expeditions of Cimon, and the domestic dissensions of Greece, the Athenian arms and policy had been gradually, during thirty years, establishing the sovereignty of the republic over her distant colonies and confederates. This bold undertaking was finally accomplished by Pericles, whose character contributed, more than that of any one man, to the glory and greatness, as well as to the calamities and ruin, of his country.

CHAP. XII. granting it.

Between the years 470 and 440, A. C.

His father Xanthippus, who gained the illustrious victory at Mycalé, rejoiced in a son endued with the happiest natural talents, and an innate love of glory. His youth was entrusted to the learned and virtuous Damon, who concealed, under the uninvidious title of master of rhetoric, the art of animating his pupil with an ambition to deserve the first rank in the republic, as well as of adorning him with the accomplishments most necessary to attain it. From Aristagoras of Clazomené, denominated the philosopher of mind, on account of his continual solicitude to confirm the most important and most pleasing of all doctrines, that a benevolent intelligence presides over the operations of nature, and the events of human life, Pericles early learned to controul the tempest of youthful passions, which so often blast the promising hopes of manhood; to pre-

Character of Pericles;

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serve an unshaken constancy in all the vicissitudes of fortune, since all are the varied dispensations of the same wise Providence; and to trample, with generous contempt, on the grovelling superstition of the vulgar. Thus qualified by nature and education, he soon displayed, in the Athenian assembly, an eloquence, nourished by the copious spring of philosophy, and ennobled by the manly elevation of his character. His speeches consisted not in the unpremeditated effusions of a temporary enthusiasm; he was the first of his countrymen, who, before pronouncing his discourses, committed them to writing[57]: they were studied and composed with the most laborious and patient care; and being polished by repeated touches of improving art, they rose in admiration in proportion as they were more closely examined by the piercing eye of criticism; and acquired the epithet of Olympian, to express that permanent and steady lustre which they reflected.[58]

he is suspected of usurpation;

But the superior talents of Pericles, which, in a well regulated government, would have increased his influence, had well nigh occasioned his ruin in a turbulent and suspicious democracy. The memory of the oldest citizens faithfully recollected, and the envy or fears of the younger readily believed, that the figure, the countenance, and the voice of the young orator, strongly resembled those of the ambitious and artful Pisistratus, whose specious virtues had subverted the

[57] Suidas. [58] Plut. in Pericl.

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liberty of his country. The alarmed jealousy of freedom, which often destroyed, in an hour, the authority established slowly, and with much labour, during many meritorious years, might be tempted to punish the anticipated tyranny of Pericles; who, to escape the disgrace of the ostracism, shunned the dangerous admiration of the assembly. CHAP. XII.

he courts and corrupts the Athenian populace;

The active vigour of his mind, thus withdrawn from politics, was totally directed to war; and his abilities, alike fitted to excel in every honourable pursuit, and gradually opening with every occasion to display them, carried off the palm of military renown from the most illustrious captains of the age. Cimon alone surpassed him in the object of his victories gained over Barbarians; but Pericles equalled Cimon in valour and conduct. A rivality in warlike fame was followed by a competition for civil honours. Cimon, who had been introduced on the theatre of public life by the virtuous Aristides, regarded, like that great man, a moderate aristocracy, as the government most conducive to public happiness. The contrary opinion was warmly maintained by Pericles, who found an ostentatious admiration of democracy the best expedient for removing the prejudice excited against him, by his resemblance to Pisistratus, of aspiring, or at least of being worthy to aspire, at royal power. On every occasion, he defended the privileges of the people against the pretensions of the rich and noble: he embraced not only the interests, but adopted the capricious passions, of the multi-

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tude; cherishing their presumption, flattering their vanity, indulging their rapacity, gratifying their taste for pleasure without expence, and fomenting their natural antipathy to the Spartans, who, as the patrons of rigid aristocracy, were peculiarly obnoxious to their resentment.

encourages their ambitious pretensions.

The condition of the times powerfully conspired with the views and measures of Pericles, since the glory and wealth acquired in the Persian war, procured not only allies and power to the state, but industry and independence to the populace. The son of Xanthippus impelled this natural current, which ran so strongly in his favour, when he maintained, that the citizens of Athens were entitled to enjoy equal advantages at home, to challenge a just pre-eminence in Greece, and to assume a legal dominion over their distant colonies and confederates.

Means by which he subdued the Athenian colonies and allies. A. C. 470—440.

These unfortunate communities had unwarily forged their own chains, when they consented to raise an annual subsidy to maintain the guardian navy of Athens. They perceived not, that this temporary benevolence would be soon converted into a perpetual tribute, since in proportion as they became unaccustomed to war, they laid themselves at the mercy of that republic, to which they had tamely entrusted the care of their defence. When the rigorous exactions of Athens speedily warned them of their error, the wide intervals at which they were separated from each other, rendered it impossible for them to afford mutual assistance, and to act with united vigour. Naxos, Thasos, Ægina, Eubœa, Samos,

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and other islands or cities of less importance, boldly struggled to repel usurpation; but fighting singly, were successively subdued; while new, and more grievous burdens were cruelly imposed on them. The least patient again murmured, petitioned, rebelled, and taking arms to resist oppression, were treated with the severity due to unprovoked sedition. The punishment inflicted on them was uniformly rigorous. They were compelled to deliver up the authors of the revolt, to surrender their shipping, to demolish their walls, or receive an Athenian garrison, to pay the expences of the war, and give hostages for their future obedience.[59] It is not the business of general history to describe more minutely the events of this social war, which was carried on chiefly by Pericles, and finished in the course of thirty years, with every success that the most presumptuous ambition of Athens could either expect or desire. Samos, the capital of the island of that name, made the most vigorous resistance; but at length surrendered to Pericles, after a siege of nine months, in the ninth year before the war of Peloponnesus.[60]

Spirit of the Athenian government;

Historians, partial or credulous, have handed down some atrocious cruelties committed after the taking of Samos, which may be confidently rejected as fictions, injurious to the fame of Pericles, who, though he approved and animated the aspiring genius of his country, and vainly flattered himself that he could justify, by reasons

[59] Thucydid. & Diodor. loc. citat. [60] Thucydid. l. i. p. 79.

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of state, its most ambitious usurpations, uniformly showed himself incapable of any deliberate wickedness. It may be observed, however, that, as the moderate peace with Sparta had been concluded chiefly with a view to allow the Athenians to apply their undivided attention to the affairs of their tributaries, the severities exercised over these unfortunate states were in consequence of that treaty rather increased than mitigated. Athenian magistrates and garrisons were sent to govern and command them. They were burdened with new impositions, and dishonoured by new badges of servitude. The lands, which the labour of their ancestors had cultivated, were seized and appropriated by strangers, who enjoyed the distinction of Athenian colonies; and all these once independent and flourishing republics were thenceforth compelled to submit their mutual contests, their domestic differences, and even their private litigations, to the cognisance and decision of Athenian assemblies and tribunals.[61] By drawing thus closely the reins of government, Pericles, in the course of ten years, brought into the treasury of Athens the sum of near two millions sterling.[62] His vigilance seasonably displayed the terrors of the Athenian navy before the most distant enemies or allies of the republic; by alternate pliancy and firmness, by successive promises, bribes, and threats, he repressed the jealous hostility of neighbouring powers; and while his ambition

its excessive severity towards its dependencies.

[61] Isocrates de Pace; & Xenoph. de Repub. Athen.

[62] Thucydid. Diodor. Isocrat. Plut. &c.

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and magnificence fortified and adorned the capital with external strength and splendour, they also laid the foundations of those internal disorders, which rendered his long administration glorious for his contemporaries, fatal to the succeeding generation, and ever memorable with posterity. CHAP. XII.

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Transition to the internal State of Athens. — Laws of Draco — Solon — Pisistratus — Clisthenes — Aristides — Pericles. — Final Settlement of the Athenian Government. — View of the Athenian Empire. — The combined Effect of external Prosperity and democratic Government on Manners — Arts — Luxury. — History of Grecian Literature and Philosophy. — Singular Contrast and Balance of Virtues and Vices. — The sublime Philosophy of Anaxagoras and Socrates. — The unprincipled Captiousness of the Sophists. — The moral Tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides. — The licentious Buffoonery of Aristophanes. — The imitative Arts employed to the noblest Purposes — and abused to the most infamous. — Magnificence of public Festivals. — Simplicity in private Life. — Modest Reserve of Athenian Women. — Voluptuousness, Impudence, and Artifices of the School of Aspasia.

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Transition to the internal state of Athens.

THE taking of Samos closed the long series of Athenian conquests. During the nine subsequent years, that once fortunate people enjoyed and abused the blessings of peace and prosperity. Their ostentatious display of power increased the envy and terror of Greeks and Barbarians, and excited the obstinate and bloody war of twenty-seven years, during which the force of the whole

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Grecian nation was exerted to demolish or uphold the stately edifice of empire that had been reared by the ambitious patriotism of Pericles. Assisted by feeble or reluctant allies, Athens long struggled against the combined strength of Peloponnesus, Bœotia, Macedon, Sicily, and Persia; and our curiosity must deservedly be attracted towards the internal resources and moral condition of a people, who, with few natural advantages, could make such memorable and pertinacious efforts, and who, amidst the din of arms, still cultivating and improving their favourite arts, produced those immortal monuments of taste and genius, which, surviving the destruction of their walls, navy, and harbours, have ever attested the glory of Athens, and the impotent vengeance of her enemies. In an enquiry of this kind, the science of government and laws, which gives security to all other sciences, merits the first place in our attention; nor, at this distance of time, will the enlightened reader contemplate with indifference the laws of Athens, which having been incorporated[1] into the Roman jurisprudence

[1] The Romans sent deputies to Athens, to obtain a copy of Solon's laws, four hundred and fifty-four years before Christ. The benefits derived from these salutary institutions were gratefully acknowledged by the liberal candour of a people, who knew how to appreciate the merit of enemies and subjects. Hear the language of Pliny (l. viii. ep. 24.) to Maximus, who in the reign of Trajan was appointed governor of the province Achaia or Greece: "Remember that you go to a country, where letters, politeness, and agriculture itself (if we believe common report), were invented Revere the gods and heroes, the ancient virtue and glory of the nation. Respect even its fables and its vanity; remembering that from Greece we derived our *laws*. The right of conquest, indeed, hath

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about the middle of the fifth century before Christ, served, after an interval of above sixteen hundred years, to abolish the barbarous practices of the Gothic nations, and to introduce justice, security, and refinement among the modern inhabitants of Europe.[2]

Laws and government.

The admirable institutions of the heroic ages were built on religion; which, as we have fully

enabled us to impose our laws on the Greeks: but that people had first given to us their laws, at our solicitation, and when they had nothing to fear from our arms. It would be inhuman and barbarous to deprive them of the small remnant of liberty which they still possess."

[2] Justinian's Pandects, it is well known, were discovered at Amalfi, in Italy, A. D. 1130. In less than half a century afterwards, the civil law was studied and understood in all the great provinces of Europe; and this study (as Mr. Hume observes, Reign of Richard the Third) tended to sharpen the wits of men, to give solidity to their judgment, to improve their taste, and to abolish the barbarous jurisprudence which universally prevailed among the Gothic nations. To this law we owe the abolition of the mode of proof by the ordeal, the corsnet, the duel, and other methods equally ridiculous and absurd. Pecuniary commutations ceased to be admitted for crimes; private revenge was no longer authorised by the magistrate; and the community was made to feel its interest in maintaining the rights, and avenging the wrongs, of all its members. See more in the admirable discourse annexed to the Reign of Richard the Third. I shall add but one observation in Mr. Hume's own words: "The sensible utility of the Roman law, both to public and private interest, recommended the study of it, at a time when the more exalted and speculative sciences carried no charms with them; and thus the last branch of ancient literature which remained uncorrupted, was happily the first transmitted to the modern world; for it is remarkable, that in the decline of Roman learning, when the philosophers were universally infected with superstition and sophistry, and the poets and historians with barbarism, the lawyers, who, in other countries, are seldom models of science or politeness, were yet able, by the constant study and close imitation of their predecessors, to maintain the same good sense in their decisions and reasonings, and the same purity in their language and expression." Hume's Hist. 3d vol. 8vo. p. 300.

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explained above, ascertained and enforced the rights and obligations of public and private life. But the abused authority of priests and oracles, and the natural depravity of man, ever solicitous to obtain the partial favour of his heavenly protectors on easier terms than the faithful discharge of his duty, gradually severed, by fraud or violence, the natural and most salutary union between religion and morality; in consequence of which separation, the former degenerated into an illiberal superstition, and the latter relaxed into licentiousness, or stiffened into pedantry. The striking comparison, or rather contrast, between the genius and character, the virtues and vices, of the Greeks, as variously described by Homer and by Solon, and which is so much to the advantage of the earlier period, must, in the progress of this discourse, naturally present itself to the reflection of the attentive reader, and will set in the clearest point of view the unhappy revolution of manners, which time and accident had produced in the wide interval between the poet and the legislator.

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Legislation of Draco; Olymp. xxxix. 1. A. C. 624.

The very imperfect legislation of Draco[3], who flourished thirty years before Solon[4], proved that the Athenians felt the want of a science, which they knew not how to acquire or cultivate. The austere gravity of that magistrate seems to have imposed on the easy credulity of the multitude; for his ignorance or severity were alike unworthy of the important office with which he was en-

[3] Suidas in voce Draco. Pollux, l. viii. c. vi.

[4] Meursius, Solon.

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trusted. He gave laws, which, according to the lively expression of an orator, seemed to be written [5], not with ink, but with blood; since death or banishment were his ordinary penalties for the most trivial offences, as well as for the most dangerous crimes: and he justified this rigour, by absurdly observing, that the smallest disorders deserved death, and no severer punishment could be inflicted on the greatest. The laws of Draco, therefore, tended only to increase the evils which they were designed to remedy [6]; and no people ever presented a scene of greater confusion and misery, than did the unhappy Athenians, when the abilities and virtues of Solon were seasonably called to their relief.

of Solon. Olymp. xlvi. 3. A. C. 594.

In relating the general revolutions of Greece, we had occasion to describe the important services, and illustrious merit of this extraordinary man, whose disinterestedness, patriotism, and humanity equalled his military conduct and success. His royal extraction (for he sprang from the race of the Codridæ), his experienced abilities, above all, his approved wisdom and equity, pointed him out for the noblest and most sublime employment of humanity, that of regulating the laws and government of a free people. Such, at least, the Athenians may be considered, when their unanimous suffrage rendered Solon the absolute umpire of their whole constitution and policy; al-

State of Athens in the time of Solon.

[5] The orator Demades, of whom more hereafter. The observation has been always repeated in speaking of Draco, though his laws were certainly *written* neither with blood nor ink. Even those of Solon were only *engraved* on tables kept in the citadel.

[6] Aristot. Politic. l. ii. & Plut. in Solon.

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though, prior to this period, they suffered the combined evils of anarchy and oppression.[7] The magistrates plundered the treasury and the temples; and often betrayed for bribes, the interests of their country. The rich tyrannised over the poor, the poor continually alarmed the safety of the rich. The rapacity of creditors knew no bounds. They compelled the insolvent debtors to cultivate their lands like cattle; to perform the service of beasts of burden; and to transfer to them their sons and daughters, whom they exported as slaves to foreign countries. Solon, with a laudable vanity, boasts of having recovered and restored to their native rights many of those unhappy men, whose sentiments had been debased, and language corrupted, by the infamy of Barbarian servitude.[8] The wretched populace deriving courage from despair, had determined no longer to submit to such multiplied rigours; and before the wisdom of the lawgiver interposed, they had taken the resolution to elect and follow some warlike leader, to attack and butcher their oppressors, to establish an equal partition of lands, and to institute a new form of government.[9] But the numerous clients and retainers, who, in a country little acquainted with arts and manufactures, depended on the wealthy proprietors of the lands and mines of Attica, must have rendered this undertaking alike dangerous to both parties; so that both became willing rather to submit their differences to law, than to decide them by the sword.

[7] Fragm. Solonis apud Demosth. p. 254. edit. Wol.
[8] Idem, ibid. [9] Plut. in Solon.

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His regulations concerning property.

The impartiality of Solon merited the unlimited confidence of his country. He maintained the ancient division of property, but abolished debts. He establised the rate of interest at 12 per cent., at which it afterwards remained; but forbade, that the insolvent debtor should become the slave of his creditor, or be compelled to sell his children into servitude. After these preliminary regulations, which seemed immediately necessary to the public peace, Solon proceeded, with an impartial and steady hand, to new-model the government[10] on this generous but equitable principle, that the few ought not, as hitherto, to command, and the many to obey; but that the collective body of the people, legally convened in a national assembly, were entitled to decide, by a plurality of voices, the alternatives of peace and war; to contract or dissolve alliances with foreign states; to enjoy all the

New-models the government.

[10] The most correct information concerning the ancient republic of Athens, and the laws of Solon, is contained in Aristot. Fragm. de Civit. Athen. and in various parts of his second, fourth, and sixth books of Politics. 2. In Isocrat. Areopagit. Panathen. & Panegyr. And 3. In Plut. in Vit. Solon. Xenophon's Treatise concerning the Athenian republic relates to later times, when many corruptions had crept in, as will be afterwards explained. It is remarkable, that Polybius, l. vi. has confounded the moderate institutions of Solon with the democratical licentiousness and tyranny introduced by Pericles and his successors in the administration. The palpable errors of so judicious an author prove how little accurate knowledge the Greeks possessed on the subject of their own history; and how impossible it is for a modern writer, who blindly follows such guides, not to fall into innumerable errors and contradictions. The treatise of Aristotle (de Civitate) above mentioned, deserves particular attention from those who write or study the history of republics. In it we see the germ, and often more than the germ, of the political works of Machiavel, which Montesquieu has so often copied, without once acknowledging his obligation.

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branches of legislative or *sovereign* power [11]; and to elect, approve, and judge the magistrates or ministers entrusted, for a limited time, with the *executive* authority.

His institutions suited the condition of the times.

In the actual state of most countries of Europe, such a form of government, as only takes place in some small cantons of Switzerland, would be attended with the inconvenience of withdrawing the citizens too much from their private affairs. But in ancient Greece, and particularly in Attica, the slaves were four times more numerous than the freemen [12]; and of the latter we may compute that little more than one half were entitled to any share in the sovereignty. Strangers, and all those who could not ascertain their Athenian descent, both in the male and female line, were totally excluded from the assembly and courts of justice. The regulations of Solon marked the utmost attention to preserve the pure blood of Athens unmixed and uncorrupted; nor could any foreigner, whatever merit he might claim with the public, be admitted to the rank of citizen, unless he abandoned for ever his native country, professed the knowledge of some highly useful or ingenious art, and, in

[11] The election contained a mixture of chance, since those who were named by the people cast lots to decide on whom the office should be conferred. The same practice prevails in choosing the senators of the republic of Berne. But Solon enacted, that the fortunate candidate should undergo what is called a probation; his character and merits were thus exposed to a second scrutiny, in consequence of which, it seemed scarcely possible that any man should attain power, who was altogether unworthy of public confidence.

[12] See my Introductory Discourse to the Orations of Lysias and Isocrates, p. 5, & seqq.

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both cases, had been chosen by ballot, in a full assembly of six thousand Athenians. These circumstances (especially as the Athenian people were usually convened only four times in thirty-five days) prevented their assemblies from being either so inconvenient and burdensome, or so numerous and tumultuary, as might at first sight be supposed. Yet their numbers, and still more their impetuosity and ignorance, must have proved inconsistent with good government, if Solon had not secured the vessel of the republic from the waves of popular frenzy, by the two firm anchors of the Senate and the Areopagus; tribunals originally of great dignity and of very extensive power, into which men of a certain description only could be received as members.

His division of the citizens.

Solon divided the Athenians into four classes, according to the produce of their estates. The first class consisted of those whose lands annually yielded five hundred measures of liquid, as well as dry commodities, and the minimum of whose yearly income may be calculated at sixty pounds sterling; which is equivalent, if we estimate the relative value of money by the price of labour, and of the things most necessary to life, to about six hundred pounds sterling in the present [13] age. The second class consisted of those whose estates produced three hundred measures; the third, of those whose estates produced two hundred; the fourth, and by far the most numerous class of Athenians, either possessed no landed property, or at least enjoyed not a revenue in land equal

[13] See Introduction to Lysias, &c. p. 14.

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to twenty-four pounds sterling, or, agreeably to the above proportion, two hundred and forty pounds of our present currency. CHAP. XIII.

All ranks of citizens were alike admitted to vote in the public assembly, and to judge in the courts of justice, whether civil or criminal, which were properly so many committees of the assembly.[14] But the three first classes were exclusively entitled to sit in the senate, to decide in the Areopagus, or to hold any other office of magistracy. To these dignities they were elected by the free suffrages of the people, to whom they were accountable for their administration, and by whom they might be punished for malversation or negligence, although they derived no emolument from the diligent discharge of their duty. Prerogatives of the first classes.

The senate of four hundred, which, eighty-six years after its institution, was augmented to five hundred by Clisthenes, enjoyed the important prerogatives of convoking the popular assembly; of previously examining all matters before they came to be decided by the people, which gave to it a negative before debate in all public resolutions; and of making laws by its sole authority, which had force during a year. Besides this general superintendence, the senate was exclu- Of the senate of the 500.

[14] In my introductory discourses to the Orations of Lysias, &c. I had occasion to explain the nature of the Athenian tribunals. Since the publication of that work, the same subject, and particularly the form of civil process, has been accurately explained by Sir William Jones, in the Dissertations annexed to his translation of Isæus. Mr. Pettingal's learned work upon the use and practice of *juries* among the ancients, lately fell into my hands. Wherein my ideas and his differ, will easily appear from the text, and needs not to be pointed out.

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sively invested with many particular branches of the executive power. The president of this board or council had the custody of the public archives and treasury. The senate alone built ships; equipped fleets and armies; seized and confined state criminals; examined and punished several offences, which were not expressly forbidden by any positive law. The weight of such a council, which assembled every day, except festivals, infused a large mixture of aristocracy into the Athenian constitution. This, as we shall immediately explain, was still farther increased by the authority of the Areopagus, a court so named from the place where it was held; a hill sacred to Mars, adjoining to the citadel.

The nine archons.

The principal magistrates in Athens were the nine archons, the first of whom gave his name to the year, and presided in the civil courts of justice, where a committee of the people, chosen promiscuously from all classes by lot [15], sat as judges and jury; but where it belonged to the archon and his assessors, men appointed by suffrage, and acquainted with forms, to take what in Scotland is called a precognition, to prescribe the form of action, to give the ballot [16], and to

[15] The essential difference between the Roman and Athenian government, consisted in the different constitution of the judicial power; which at Rome remained 300 years in the hands of the senate. The seditions of the Gracchi, and most of the civil dissensions which happened before the time of Augustus, had for their object or pretence, the altering of this order of things, and bringing the Roman constitution nearer the Athenian.

[16] Οι τιθεντες τον αγωνα και την ψηφον διδοντες, are the words of Lysias. The same writer mentions the παρεδροι, συνδικαι, assessors, syndics.

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receive and declare the verdict and sentence of the court. The archon next in dignity, who had the appellation of king, presided in causes respecting religion and things sacred, which formed the object of an important and dangerous branch of Athenian jurisprudence. The archon third in dignity, with his assessors the [17] generals, presided in military matters; and the six remaining, who were known by the general appellation of thesmothetæ, heard criminal pleas of various kinds, or rather directed the proceedings of the six courts where criminal causes were examined and determined. These nine archons, or presidents of the several courts of justice, like all other Athenian magistrates, were, at the expiration of their annual office, accountable to the people; and when their conduct, after a severe scrutiny, appeared to merit public approbation and gratitude, they were received, and remained for life, members of the Areopagus, a senate invested with a general inspection over the laws and religion, as well as over the lives and manners of the citizens; and which, in dangerous emergencies, was even entitled to assume a sort of dictatorial power. [18]

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The Areopagus.

Such is the great outline of the constitution established by Solon, according to which every Athenian citizen enjoyed the inestimable privilege of being judged by his peers, and tried by

Happy tendency of Solon's plan of government.

[17] Lysias, in the second oration against Alcibiades (a military cause), not only mentions the στρατηγοι, or generals, but addresses them separately from the ανδρες δικασται, or judges.

[18] Isocrat. Oratio Areopagit.

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laws to which he himself had consented. Although the legislative and judicial powers were thus lodged with the people, men of property and ability were alone entrusted with the administration of government; and as power in some measure followed property, the same expedient which served to maintain a due distinction of ranks in society, tended also to promote the industry and frugality of the multitude, that they might thereby become entitled to share those honours and offices, to which persons of a certain estate only could aspire.

Extensive nature of his laws.

The laws of Solon were of the most extensive nature, comprehending not only rules of right, but maxims of morality, regulations of commerce, and precepts of agriculture. To describe his institutions respecting such matters as are properly the objects of legislation, would be explaining those great, but familiar principles, concerning marriage, succession, testaments, the rights of *persons* and of *things*, which, through the medium of the Roman law, have been conveyed into the jurisprudence of all the civilised nations of Europe. His laws concerning education and manners prove that drunkenness and unnatural love were the predominant vices of that early age. It was a particular duty of the archons, to prevent or punish offences, committed in consequence of intoxication; and the regulations concerning schools[19], which were not to be opened till sunrise, which were ordered to be shut before night, and into which none but such relations of the master, as were particularly

[19] Æschin. in Timarchum.

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specified by law could on any pretence be admitted, marked the utmost solicitude to root out an evil which already infected and disgraced the manners of Greece.

His system of education.

The education recommended by Solon nearly resembled that above described, which prevailed generally through Greece.[20] The children of Athenian citizens, when taken from the hands of the women, were delivered to two masters, of whom the one formed the body and the other the mind. Swimming, and the easier exercises, prepared them for the harder toils of the gymnastic. Reading and learning by heart the precepts and examples of the poets, made way for the severer studies of eloquence and philosophy. In process of time, music, geometry, and drawing, seem to have entered into the plan of a liberal education.[21] At the age of twenty, the youth of all ranks took an oath in the temple of Agraulos (an appellation of Minerva), to obey and to maintain the laws of their country; to use their best endeavours to promote its prosperity; to follow the standard of whatever commanders might be appointed to conduct them; to sail to every part of the world, when summoned by the public service; to fight to death for their native land; and to regard wheat, barley, vines, and olives, as the only boundaries of Attica[22]; a preposterous arrogance in that little republic, which already betrayed an ambition to conquer and appropriate all the cultivated parts

Duties and employments of the youth.

[20] See chapters V. and VI.

[21] Arist. Polit. l. vii. c. 3.

[22] See Introduction to Lysias, &c. p. 16.

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of the world. When the Athenian youth were not, in consequence of this oath, engaged in military service, they were obliged by law to follow such employments as suited their respective fortunes. Agriculture, commerce, and mechanic arts, fell to the share of the poor; the rich still continued their application to gymnastic and philosophy, carefully studied the laws of the republic, examined the ancient and actual condition of their own and neighbouring states; and, at the age of thirty, appeared as candidates in the assembly for such offices of trust and honour as their regular manners, inoffensive and dutiful behaviour in all the relations of private life, temperance, œconomy, public spirit, and abilities[23], might obtain from the voluntary suffrage of the people.

Usurpation of Pisistratus. A. C. 578.

The usurpation of Pisistratus, though it destroyed for a time the political liberty of Athens, gave stability to most of the laws and forms introduced by Solon. That extraordinary *tyrant*, for so the Greeks styled him, was not more distinguished by the loftiness of his genius than the humanity of his disposition; and had not the violence of contending factions, and the fury of his enemies, inflamed his natural love of power, the name of Pisistratus would stand the foremost in the list of Grecian patriots and heroes. His valour and conduct were signalised in the conquest of Nisæa, Salamis, Naxos, Delos, and Sigæum; and if he displayed boldness and address in acquiring sovereignty, he displayed still more

[23] Lysias, passim.

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moderation and virtue in administering it. He assumed, indeed, the royal dignities of priest and general, and took care that the chief offices of magistracy should be filled by his partisans. But he maintained the regular course of law and justice, not only by his authority, but by his example; having appeared in person to answer an accusation in the Areopagus. He not only enforced the laws of Solon against idleness, but endeavoured to give them more efficacy by introducing new arts and manufactures into Attica. He was the first who brought into that country the complete collection of Homer's poems, which he commanded to be sung at the Panathenæan festival; nor can we suppose that he should have been zealous to diffuse the liberal and manly sentiments of that divine poet, if his government had not resembled the moderation and equity of the heroic ages, rather than the despotism of tyrants.

His moderate and wise administration;

His son Hipparchus imitated and surpassed the mild virtues of his father; and, amidst the turbulence of the latter democracy, it was acknowledged with a sigh by the Athenians, that their ancestors were indeed happy under Solon and Pisistratus, but that the reign of the tyrant Hipparchus brought back on earth the golden days of Saturn. The father had required a tenth part of the produce of Attica, to support his guards and the other appendages of royalty; his more generous son remitted one half of this imposition. While he alleviated the burdens, yet encouraged the industry of his subjects, by building the temple of Olympian Jupiter, he was so-

surpassed by that of his son Hipparchus.

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licitous to dispel their ignorance and barbarity by erecting pillars in every part of the city, engraved with elegiac verses, containing lessons of wisdom and precepts of morality. He collected the first library in Athens; and his liberal rewards, and still more his agreeable manners and winning affability, attracted to that city the most distinguished poets of the age.

His murder exasperates Hippias.

The murder of Hipparchus exasperated the temper of his brother and successor Hippias; but notwithstanding the calamities which the latter inflicted and suffered, it must be allowed that the government of Pisistratus and his family, which, with various interruptions, lasted sixty-eight years[24], increased the strength, and promoted the refinement of Athens.[25]

The government changed by Clisthenes. Olymp. lxvii. 3. A. C. 510.

Yet in nothing was that usurpation more advantageous than in the animating sense of liberty which the memory of past servitude, under Hippias, excited and kept alive in Athens, after the popular government had been restored by Clisthenes. We have already had occasion to relate the foreign victories of the republic, which immediately followed that event; but at the same time the constitution of government underwent a considerable change: by admitting to the rank of citizens a promiscuous crowd of strangers, fugitives, Athenians of half blood, and perhaps slaves, the tribes were augmented from four to ten; and the senators, from four to five hun-

[24] Between 578 and 510, B. C.

[25] See the treatise of Meursius, entitled Pisistratus, one of the few satisfactory performances in the immense collection of Gronovius.

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dred. The ostracism was likewise established; a law by which any citizen whose influence or abilities seemed dangerous to liberty might be banished ten years, without the proof or allegation of any positive crime. CHAP. XIII.

In this condition the republic continued thirty years, until the glorious victories of Salamis, Platæa, and Mycalé, encouraged the lowest but most numerous class of citizens, by whose valour those memorable exploits had been achieved, to make further invasions on the prerogatives of their superiors. The sudden wealth, which the rich spoils of the Barbarians had diffused among all ranks of men, increased the *census* of individuals, and destroyed the balance of the constitution. Aristides, who perceived it to be impossible to resist the natural progress of democracy, seasonably yielded to men who had arms in their hands, and firmness in their hearts; and proposed, with apparent satisfaction, but much secret reluctance[26], a law by which the Athenian magistrates should be thenceforth promiscuously elected from the four classes of citizens. This innovation paved the way for the still greater changes begun twenty years afterwards, and gradually completed by Pericles; a revolution of which the consequences were not immediately felt, but which continually became more sensible, and finally terminated in the ruin of Athens and of Greece.

Important alteration made by Aristides. Olymp. lxxv. 2. A. C. 479.

The general reasons which prevailed on the

The democracy com-

[26] Ἑκὼν ἀκοντι δε θυμω is cited on this occasion by Plutarch, to express the forced generosity of Aristides to the populace.

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pleted by Pericles. Olymp. lxxxii. 4. A. C. 449.

equity and discernment of Pericles to espouse, with undue warmth, the cause of the populace, have in the preceding chapter been sufficiently explained. Yet whatever partial motives of interest and ambition[27] might warp the views of this illustrious statesman, it must be acknowledged that the foreign transactions and success of the republic, and particularly the new situation in which the Athenians found themselves placed with regard to their distant allies and colonies, might naturally suggest and occasion very important alterations in the Athenian constitution.

Introduction of pay to the troops;

The ancient and sacred law, which obliged every citizen, without fee or reward, to take arms in defence of his country, could not easily be extended to the obligation of protecting, without a proper recompense, the interest of foreign communities. The scanty population of Attica sufficed not to answer the demands of so many distant expeditions. It became necessary to hire troops wherever they might be found; and as this necessity introduced pay into the Athenian armies, a similar, though not equally cogent, reason established fees and salaries for all the different orders of judges and magistrates. The same principle of duty and public spirit, which obliged

of fees and salaries to the magistrates.

[27] Plutarch (in Pericle) mentions a particular reason which engaged Pericles to counteract the aristocracy, and to abridge the power of the Areopagus. Although he had been often *named* for the office of archon, the *lot* had never fallen on him; so that he could not be received as a member of that respected court. If this observation be well founded, it shows how little real weight the annual magistracies had at Athens; since Pericles, though he never attained the dignity of archon, governed the republic many years with unrivalled authority.

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every freeman to fight without pay, likewise obliged him gratuitously to judge, consult, and deliberate, for the benefit of his country. But when the contested interests of foreign, though dependent communities, were agitated and adjusted in the tribunals of Athens, it was natural for those who spent their time in an employment to which no social obligation called them, to demand a proper reward for their useful services. At first, therefore, a *small* sum, but which gradually increased with the power of the people, was regularly distributed among the citizens, for every deliberation which they held, and for every cause which they determined.

These circumstances totally unhinge the government established by Solon.

The desire of reaping this profit made the populace anxious to draw all causes and deliberations before their own tribunals and assemblies. This design was successfully accomplished by Ephialtes[28], an artful and daring demagogue, whom Pericles employed as a proper instrument to effect such invidious measures as were most obnoxious to the rich and noble. While his patron extended the renown of Athens by his foreign victories, and gradually reduced into subjection the colonies and allies of the republic, the obsequious Ephialtes zealously promoted his domestic measures; and by undermining the authority of the senate and of the Areopagus[29], the firmest bulwarks of the aristocracy,

[28] Plut. in Pericle.

[29] Authors have not described in what particular respects, or by what particular means, Ephialtes effected his purpose: yet we may collect, from obscure hints on this subject, that he not only brought

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obtained a signal victory over the laws of Solon. The assassination of Ephialtes proved only the weakness of his enemies; and we shall find, in the subsequent history of Athens, that most matters of deliberation came, thenceforth, in the first instance, before the popular assembly; that the wise institutions of Solon were reduced to an empty form; and that the magnanimity of Pericles, the extravagance of his immediate successors, the patriotism of Thrasybulus and Conon, the integrity of Phocion, the artifices of Æschines, and the eloquence of Demosthenes, successively swayed, at will, a wild and capricious democracy.

External and domestic prosperity of the republic. Olymp. lxxxv. 1. A. C. 440.

The revolution which immediately followed, in the manners, character, and conduct of the Athenians, was the natural consequence of the change of government, combined with other circumstances naturally resulting from their domestic and external prosperity. In the course of a few years, the success of Aristides, Cimon, and Pericles, had tripled the revenues, and in-

before the inferior tribunals causes hitherto confined to the Areopagus, but took from that court its general inspection and superintendence over the religion and laws; which offices he bestowed on the popular court of the ἡλιαία and the νομοφύλακες, who were appointed, and dismissed, at the will of the people. He likewise rendered the *probation* for becoming an *Areopagite* less severe than formerly. Persons crept into this order, whose character disgraced it. The Areopagites became equally accessible to presents and to beauty; and their decisions fell into contempt. See the Discourse of Isocrates upon reforming the government of Athens, and Athenæus, l. ix. That Ephialtes, or Pericles himself, likewise weakened the authority of the senate (although it is not remarked by any ancient author), appears from all the subsequent history of Athens.

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creased, in a far greater proportion, the dominions of the republic. The Athenian gallies commanded the eastern coasts of the Mediterranean; their merchantmen had engrossed the traffic of the adjacent countries; the magazines of Athens abounded with wood, metal, ebony, ivory, and all the materials of the useful as well as of the agreeable arts; they imported the luxuries of Italy, Sicily, Cyprus, Lydia, Pontus, and Peloponnesus; experience had improved their skill of working the silver mines of mount Laurium; they had lately opened the valuable marble veins in mount Pentelicus; the honey of Hymettus became important in domestic use and foreign traffic; the culture of their olives (oil being long their staple commodity, and the only production of Attica which Solon allowed them to export) must have improved with the general improvement of the country in arts and agriculture, especially under the active administration of Pericles, who liberally let loose the public treasure to encourage every species of industry.[30] CHAP. XIII.

Effect of this, combined with the change of government, on manners and arts.

But if that minister promoted the love of action, he found it necessary at least to comply with, if not to excite the extreme passion for pleasure, which then began to distinguish his countrymen. The people of Athens, successful in every enterprise against their foreign as well as domestic enemies, seemed entitled to reap the fruits of their dangers and victories. For the space of at least twelve years preceding the war of Peloponn-

[30] Isocrat. Areop. de Pace, & Panegyr. Xenoph. & Aristot. de Repub. Athen.

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nesus, their city afforded a perpetual scene of triumph and festivity. Dramatic entertainments, to which they were passionately addicted, were no longer performed in slight unadorned edifices, but in stone or marble theatres erected at great expense, and embellished with the most precious productions of nature and of art. The treasury was opened, not only to supply the decorations of this favourite amusement, but to enable the poorer citizens to enjoy it, without incurring any private expense; and thus, at the cost of the state, or rather of its tributary allies and colonies, to feast and delight their ears and fancy with the combined charms of music and poetry. The pleasure of the eye was peculiarly consulted and gratified in the architecture of theatres and other ornamental buildings; for as Themistocles had strengthened, Pericles adorned his native city; and unless the concurring testimony of antiquity was illustrated in the Parthenon, or temple of Minerva, and other existing remains worthy to be immortal, it would be difficult to believe that, in the space of a few years, there could have been created those numerous, yet inestimable wonders of art, those temples, theatres, statues, altars, baths, gymnasia, and porticoes, which, in the language of ancient panegyric, rendered Athens the eye and light of Greece. [31]

Luxury and vices of Athens.

Pericles was blamed for thus decking one favourite city, like a vain voluptuous harlot, at the expense of plundered provinces [32]; but it would have been fortunate for the Athenians if their

[31] Isocrat. & Aristid. in Panegyr.
[32] Plutarch in Pericle.

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extorted wealth had not been employed in more perishing, as well as more criminal, luxury. The pomp of religious solemnities, which were twice as numerous and costly in Athens as in any other city of Greece; the extravagance of entertainments and banquets, which on such occasions always followed the sacrifices; the increase of private luxury, which naturally accompanied this public profusion, exhausted the resources, without augmenting the glory, of the republic. Instead of the bread, herbs, and simple fare recommended by the laws of Solon, the Athenians, soon after the eightieth Olympiad, availed themselves of their extensive commerce to import the delicacies of distant countries, which were prepared with all the refinements of cookery.[33] The wines of Cyprus were cooled with snow in summer; in winter[34] the most delightful flowers adorned the tables and persons of the wealthy Athenians. Nor was it sufficient to be crowned with roses, unless they were likewise anointed with the most precious perfumes.[35] Parasites, dancers, and buffoons, were an usual appendage of every entertainment.[36] Among the weaker sex, the passion for delicate birds, distinguished by their voice or plumage, was carried to such excess as merited the name of madness.[37] The bodies of such youths as were not peculiarly addicted to hunting and horses, which began to be

[33] Aristoph. Nubes, ver. 50. & Lysistrat. passim.
[34] Athen. l. xi. 3. & Xenoph. Memorabilia, l. ii.
[35] Xenoph. ibid. [36] Athenæus, l. i. & Xenoph. Symp.
[37] Ορνιθομανια, Athen. l. xi. 3.

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a prevailing taste[38], were corrupted by the commerce of harlots, who had reduced their profession into system[39]; while their minds were still more polluted by the licentious philosophy of the sophists. It is unnecessary to crowd the picture, since it may be observed, in one word, that the vices and extravagancies, which are supposed to characterise the declining ages of Greece and Rome, took root in Athens during the administration of Pericles, the most splendid and most prosperous in the Grecian annals.

Contrast and balance of virtues and vices, advantages and disadvantages.

This paradox, for such it must appear, may be explained by considering the singular combination of circumstances, which, in the time of that statesman, gave every poison its antidote, and rendered the partial evils already described, only the thorn that ever accompanies the rose. The Grecian history of those times affords a more striking contrast than ever appeared in any other age or country, of wisdom and folly, of magnanimity and meanness, of liberty and tyranny, of simplicity and refinement, of austerity and voluptuousness. The sublime philosophy of Anaxagoras and Socrates was accompanied, as with a deadly shade, by the dark unprincipled captiousness of the sophists; the pathetic and moral strains of Sophocles and Euripides were parodied by the licentious buffoonery of Aristophanes; painting and sculpture, which, under geniuses of the first order, like Phidias, served as hand-maids to religion and virtue, degenerated under inferior artists into mean hirelings of vice and dis-

[38] Aristoph. Nubes, passim. [39] Alexis apud Athenæum, l. xiii.

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order; the modesty of Athenian matrons was set off as by a foil, when compared with the dissoluteness of the school of Aspasia; and the simple frugality of manners, which commonly prevailed in private families, even of the first distinction, was contrasted with the extravagant dissipation of public entertainments and festivals. To examine the parallel links of this complicated chain will illustrate the character of a people whose subsequent transactions form one principal object of Grecian history.

Parallel links of this chain examined.

Philosophy, which in Greece alone deserves the peculiar attention of the historian, arose about the beginning of the sixth century before Christ, and in an hundred and fifty years attained the highest degree of perfection, and sunk into the lowest degeneracy and corruption, to which the use or abuse of the human intellect could raise or plunge it. Lesser Asia, to which Europe and America owe the inestimable benefits of their religion and letters, produced and nourished the tender plant of philosophy; and the flourishing Greek colonies on that delightful coast, communicated to their mother country this precious offspring of their soil. Thales of Miletus, Pittacus of Mitylenè, Bias of Prienè, Cleobulus of Lindus in the isle of Rhodes, and the other wise men, as they were emphatically styled, who lived in that age, not only gave advice and assistance to their countrymen on difficult emergencies, but restrained their vices by wholesome laws, improved their manners by useful lessons of morality, and extended their knowledge by im-

History of Greek philosophy.

The seven Sages.

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portant researches and discoveries.[40] But the first attempt towards moral philosophy, as independent on, and unconnected with, religion, seems to have been the fables of Æsop, which, to men in an early period of society, must have appeared a very serious and useful species of composition. The sphere of history was narrow; the examples of the gods, amidst the continual corruptions of superstition, had become too flagitious for imitation; and men, whose rustic simplicity of life afforded them continual opportunities to observe the instinctive sagacity of certain animals, might derive many useful lessons from those humble instructors. In the early ages of Greece and Rome, and of all other nations whose history is recorded, fables were told, and in some degree believed, in the assembly and senate-house, on the most important occasions; for, in the infancy of society, men are children; and the delusion, which the belief of a fable supposes, is not more gross and improbable than many of those errors into which (as we have already proved[41]) their lively fancy had often plunged them. The same romantic cast of imagination which had animated woods and winds, mountains and rivers, which had changed heroes into gods, and gods into frail men, might endow animals with reason, and even speech.

Æsop the fabulist.

The next step towards moral science was of a more refined and abstract kind, consisting of the

The gnomonic poets.

[40] Plutarch. Sympos. & de Placit. Philosoph. Plato in Protagor. Diogen. Laert. passim.

[41] See above, Chap. II.

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sentences of the gnomologic poets [42], and in those detached precepts or proverbs which, in all countries, have preceded any systematic account of morality. Each of the seven sages, as they were called, had his favourite maxim [43], which he engraved in temples and other places of public resort; but at this distance of time it is impossible, amidst the differences of authors, to discover what belongs to each; nor is the search important, since all their maxims or proverbs, whatever efforts of generalization they might cost their inventors, now appear extremely simple and familiar.

These respectable fathers of Grecian philosophy, who silently diffused light through the gloom of a barbarous age, are said to have maintained a correspondence [44] with each other, as well as with Solon of Athens, Chilon of Sparta, and Periander of Corinth; men who, in imitation of their eastern brethren, chiefly cultivated such practical knowledge as qualified them to be the legislators, magistrates, and generals of their respective countries.

The discoveries of Thales the Milesian.

Thales the Milesian, alone, quitted the ordinary pursuits of civil and military renown; and although he composed verses, promulgated moral sentences, and, on some particular emergencies, gave seasonable advice to his countrymen, yet he established his fame on a basis more

[42] See the Sentences of Theognis, which are evidently a collection, not the work of one man.

[43] Aristot. Rhet. ii. 21. Stobæus, Serm. p. 44, &c.

[44] Plut. Symp.

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broad and permanent than the fluctuating interests of perishing communities. Many of the elementary propositions of geometry, afterwards collected by Euclid, were first discovered [45] by Thales, who directed the acuteness of his mind with equal success to astronomy. He divided the heavens into five zones; discovered the equinoxes and solstices; remarked the Ursa Minor; observed, and nearly predicted, eclipses. The division of the year into three hundred and sixty-five days was already known to the Egyptians; but although Thales might borrow this, and perhaps other discoveries, from that ancient people, among whom he sometimes resided, it appears, even from those authors who are ever prone to exaggerate the wisdom of Egypt, that he owed much less to that country, than to the native sagacity and penetration of his clear comprehensive mind. [46]

His school and successors,

Thales founded the Ionic school, in which he was succeeded by Anaximander and Anaximenes, who were followed by Anaxagoras, the instructor of Pericles, and Archelaus, who is called by ancient writers the master of Socrates. About fifty years after Thales, the same speculations which he had introduced were pursued by Xenophanes of Colophon, Leucippus and Parmenides of Elea, and Heraclitus of Ephesus. These ingenious men discovered many useful truths; yet all of them, not excepting Thales

[45] Proclus in Euclid.

[46] Hieronym. apud Laert. l. i. c. 27. Plin. l. xxxviii. c. 17.

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himself, likewise busied themselves with subjects that will for ever excite and elude human curiosity. Their doctrines were equally liable to objection, whichever of the elements they assumed as the first principle of nature; they universally agreed in asserting the fallacy of the senses, and the unworthiness of the vulgar superstition; but their various opinions concerning the origin and destruction of worlds, the magnitudes and distances of heavenly bodies, the essence of matter and spirit [47], deserve only to be considered as the dreams of inquisitive men, whose ambition of knowledge carried them beyond the sphere of experience, and the clear deductions of reason. The system of Leucippus, the most famous of them all, was improved by Democritus of Abdera [48], and afterwards adopted by Epicurus, whose philosophy is sufficiently explained in the extraordinary work of Lucretius, the boldest monument which the world is ever likely to behold, of learning, genius, and impiety.

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degenerate into atheism.

But it is particularly worthy of observation, that while Democritus assailed the celestial mansions, and unveiled, with a daring hand, the feeble majesty of Grecian superstition, Anaxagoras of Clazomenè, at precisely the same period, revealed a new and infinitely more august spectacle, by first announcing to the heathen world, a self-existent, all-perfect mind, as the great

The sublime philosophy of Anaxagoras.

[47] See Diogen. Laert. l. i. Aristot. Metaph. passim, & Plut. de Placit. Philosoph.

[48] Laert. l. ix. Aristot. Physic. l. viii.

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cause and arranger of the material world. Thales and Pythagoras, with such of their disciples as faithfully adhered to their tenets, had indeed admitted spirit as a constituent principle of the universe; but they had so intimately blended mind and matter, that these dissimilar substances seemed to make an indissoluble compound, as the soul and body constitute but one man. According to Anaxagoras, on the other hand, the creating and sovereign intelligence was to be carefully distinguished from the soul of the world, which he seems to have regarded merely as a poetical expression for the laws which the Deity had impressed on his works. The great Ruler of the universe did not animate, but impel matter; he could not be included within its limited and perishing terms; his nature was pure and spiritual, and totally incapable of pollution by any corporeal admixture. [49]

The discovery and diffusion of this luminous and sublime principle, which was naturally followed by an investigation of the moral attributes of the Deity, and the deducing from thence the great duties of morality, might have produced a general and happy revolution in Greece, under the zealous and persevering labours of Socrates and his followers, if the tendency of this divine philosophy had not been counteracted, not only by the gross prejudices of the vulgar, but by the more dangerous refinements of incredulous Sophists.

[49] Aristot. Metaphys. l. i. c. 5. Plato in Cratylo, & Plut. in Pericle.

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The same spirit of inquiry, which leads to the discovery of truth, will often promote the propagation of error; and unfortunately for Greece, in the middle of the fifth century before Christ, errors were propagated, so congenial to the condition of the times, that they could not fail to take deep root, and flourish in a soil which was peculiarly well prepared to receive them. The glorious victories over the Carthaginians and Persians had increased the wealth and security, called forth the invention and industry, but, at the same time, multiplied the wants, and inflamed the passions, of the Greeks. The more powerful cities, and particularly Athens and Syracuse, had attained a pitch of prosperity which exceeded their most sanguine hopes: elated by the bloom of health, and the pride of riches, they continually sighed for new and unknown enjoyments, while both individuals and communities were ever ready to listen to such instructors as justified their vices, and taught them to abuse the gifts of fortune.

Its tendency counteracted by the Sophists.

In this situation of affairs appeared the Sophists[50], whose appellative, still familiar in the languages of Europe, pretty faithfully expresses their character. Hippias of Elis, Protagoras of Abdera, Prodicus of Ceos, Georgias of Leontium, with many inferior names, preserved in the writings of Xenophon, Plato, and Isocrates, started up about the same time, and exhibited a new phenomenon in Greece. The Olympic, and

History of the Sophists. Olymp. lxxxv. 1. A. C. 440.

[50] Vid. Philostrat. de Vit. Sophist.

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other public assemblies, furnished them with an opportunity to display their specious accomplishments to the admiring spectators. They frequented the great cities, particularly Athens, and acquired the friendship of the rich, and the applause of the multitude. They professed the knowledge of every science, and of every art, which they taught publicly, for a stipulated price; and, as they really possessed the art of persuasion, their disciples continually increased among the rich and the voluptuous, the idle and the vain.

Their character and views.

Their language was glowing and harmonious, their manners elegant, their life splendid. When it served their interest, and pleased the taste of their hearers, they could paint virtue in the fairest and most engaging colours; but the capricious will of their scholars, whose passions they were ever careful to gratify, served as the only standard of their principles; and engaged them, for the most part, to deck out the barren doctrines of Leucippus and Democritus with the meretricious arts of the rhetorician. Their morality supplied the springs from which Epicurus watered his gardens; and their captious logic furnished the arguments by which Pyrrho laboured to justify his scepticism.[51] It would be easy to trace up to the Sophists that quibbling metaphysic, which being embodied in the Greek language, thenceforth adhered too closely to the philosophical writings of that people, and which

Their influence on philosophy and manners.

[51] See the note on the Sophists, in my Translation of Isocrates' Panegyric of Athens, p. 1. & seq.

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totally disfigures many otherwise valuable compositions of antiquity. But our present business is only to remark the destructive effects immediately resulting from their tenets, which, while they undermined, without openly opposing, the ancient and popular superstition, boldly set at defiance all those useful maxims of conduct, and all those salutary discoveries of reason, which, amidst the insolence of the Greek democracies, fomented by prosperity, appeared essentially requisite to restrain the intemperance, injustice, and violence, of individuals and communities. CHAP. XIII.

In several republics of Greece, the Sophists enjoyed a free career to exert their talents, practise their artifices, and to promote their fame and fortune. But in Athens their frauds were detected, and their characters unmasked by Socrates[52], whose philosophy forms an important era in the history of the human mind. The son of Sophroniscus was born at Athens, forty years before the commencement of the Peloponnesian war. The smallness of his patrimony, amounting only to three hundred pounds, and his original profession of a statuary[53], have encouraged an opinion of the obscurity of his birth, among writers who did not reflect on the narrowness of Athenian fortunes, and who forgot to consider, that as hereditary distinctions were little known or regarded in the Grecian republics, a solid and Opposed by Socrates.

[52] To avoid prolixity in the account of Socrates and his philosophy, I cite not particular passages, but give the general result of my reading in Plato and Xenophon.

[53] Laert. l. ii. art. Socrat.

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permanent lustre was derived from the practice of ingenious arts, which could not be cultivated, as in ancient Rome, and sometimes in modern Europe, by servile or mercenary hands, but only by the first class of freemen and citizens. Whatever reputation or advantage Socrates might have acquired by the exercise of a profession, which was peculiarly encouraged by the taste of the times, and the magnificent spirit of Pericles, he readily sacrificed to the natural bent of his mind, which concealed, under an external form worthy to represent the voluptuous Silenus[54], the fruitful seeds of every amiable and manly sentiment, and determined him, by an irresistible impulse, to the study of wisdom and virtue.

His education and character.

In his early youth he heard the physics of Archelaus, and learned the geometry of Theodorus[55]; and from these, and other teachers, acquired such an acquaintance with the fashionable theories concerning the formation of the universe, the original principles of things, the hidden powers of matter, as enabled him to regard with just contempt, and occasionally to deride with inimitable humour, the vanity of those useless and shadowy speculations. He acknowledged with the pious Anaxagoras, the superintending mind, whose providence regulated the operations of nature, as well as the affairs of human life. He denied not the existence of those inferior intelligences, which formed

[54] Plato & Xenoph. in Symp.
[55] Plato in Theætet. & in Menon.

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only objects of popular adoration; he allowed the divine origin of dreams and omens; he was exemplary in all the religious duties of his country; and were we to judge the Athenian sage by the standard of ordinary men, we should be inclined to believe that he had not entirely escaped the contagion of superstition; since he professed to be accompanied by a dæmon, or invisible conductor, who often restrained his passions, and influenced his behaviour.[56] If this assertion was not an effect of that refined *irony* familiar to Socrates, we must allow his temper to have been tinged with credulity: yet, whoever seriously reflects on a life of seventy years, spent in the service of mankind, uniformly blameless, and terminated by a voluntary death, in obedience to the unjust laws of his country; whoever considers attentively the habitual temperance, the unshaken probity, the active usefulness, the diffusive beneficence, the constant equanimity and cheerfulness of this singular man, will admit a degree of enthusiasm, rather as the ornament, than defect, of such an extraordinary character. Men of learning and genius, who, examining the matter still more deeply, have observed the important revolution produced by the life and death of Socrates, on the principles and sentiments of his contemporaries, and of posterity, are disposed to believe that such an extraordinary phænomenon could not have appeared in the moral world, without the particular interposition of heaven. The cheerful serenity of his last

[56] Plut. de Genio Socratis.

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moments [57], and still more, the undeviating tenor of his active virtue, justified the hardest maxims of Lycurgus and Pythagoras; while the main aim of his speculations was to establish the sublime morality of those sages on the clearest deductions of reason and experience.

His philosophy.

From the perfections of the supreme intelligence, he deduced his just government of the universe, which implied the immortality of the human soul. But the great object of his research was to discover those general laws by which, even in this life, the superintending Providence had variously dispensed to men, good and evil, happiness and misery. These laws he regarded as the promulgated will of the God, with which, when clearly ascertained, it became our duty invariably to comply; since nothing but the most short-sighted folly could risk incurring the divine displeasure, in order to avoid pain or poverty, sickness or death; far less to enjoy perishing gratifications, which leave a sting behind them. Reasoning on such principles, and taking experience only for his guide, he deduced, with admirable perspicuity, the interests and duties of nations and individuals, in all the complicated relations of society. The actions of men furnished the materials, their instruction formed the object, their happiness was the end of his discourse. Wherever his lessons might be most generally useful, there he was always to be found; frequenting, at an early hour, the Academy, Lyceum, and other public *Gymnasia;*

[57] This subject will be treated hereafter.

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punctually attending the forum at mid-day, the hour of full assembly; and at even joining, without the affectation of austerity, in the convivial entertainments of his friends, or accompanying them in the delightful walks which adorned the banks of the Ilyssus. As a husband, a father, a citizen, and a soldier, the steady practice of his duty continually illustrated his doctrines. The conversation and example of this truly practical philosopher (and this is his highest panegyric) persuaded many of his fellow-citizens sincerely to embrace a virtuous course of life; and even those who, like Critias and Alcibiades, allowed the current of their passions to prevail over the conviction of their sober hours, were still charmed with the wonderful extent, as well as the singular accuracy, of his various knowledge; with the acuteness and penetration of his arguments; the beauty, vivacity, and persuasiveness of his style; which, whether he assumed the tone of reason or of ridicule, surpassed whatever had been deemed most eloquent.[58]

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Its influence.

Yet, how great soever might be the personal influence of Socrates, the triumph of his philosophy became more illustrious and complete, after his principles were embraced by those who cultivated the imitative arts, and directed the public amusements, which in all countries, but particularly in Greece, have ever produced immediate and powerful effects on the national opinions and character. In Greece alone, the theatre was regarded as an object of the first

Assisted by the tragic poets,

[58] Xenoph. Memor. l. iv. c. 15. Laert. l. ii. c. 19. & seq. & Cicero de Orat. iii. 16.

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importance and magnitude; it formed an essential, and by far the most splendid, part of religious worship; the expence of supporting it exceeded that of the army and navy together; and this celebrated entertainment, which united the tragedy and opera of the moderns, was carried to perfection by a favourite disciple of Socrates, whose works were so universally admired in Greece, that (as we shall have occasion to relate in the Sicilian war) the Syracusans released from captivity those Athenians, and those only, who had learned to repeat the verses of Euripides.

particularly Euripides;

This admired poet rendered the Grecian tragedy complete, by perfecting the chorus[50], the principal distinction between the ancient and the modern drama, and which, when properly conducted, rendered the former more regular, yet more varied; more magnificent, and at the same time more affecting; above all, more interesting and more instructive.

who perfected the chorus.

From the prevailing manners of the times, when the principal citizens lived together in crowds, and daily frequented the public halls, the *gymnasia*, the forums, and temples, it was natural to expect that the action of a Grecian

[50] In this part of the drama, the philosophy of Euripides excels the loftiness of Æschylus, and the richness of Sophocles. It is sufficient to compare the works of the three rivals, to perceive that the chorus in Euripides most faithfully answers the description of Horace;

Ille bonis faveatque, et consilietur amicis,
Et regat iratos, et amet peccare timentes.
Ille dapes laudet mensæ brevis, ille salubrem
Justitiam, legesque, et apertis otia portis;
Ille tegat commissa; deosque precetur et oret,
Ut redeat miseris, abeat fortuna superbis.

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tragedy, should consist in some great public event, which interested the whole body of the people. The scene was usually the portico of a temple, the gate of a palace, the wide expanse of a forum, or market-place. In such places, many spectators must be supposed present, who would naturally take part in an action which concerned the public interest and happiness.[60] On this principle was introduced the ancient chorus, consisting of such persons as most properly suited the occasion, and who, though not immediately or principally concerned in the catastrophe, had such general and indirect interest, as kept them continually on the scene, and made them approve or condemn, promote or oppose, the sentiments and measures of the actors. The chorus, never quitting the stage, necessarily introduced the unity of place; and as their songs and dances between the acts expressed the feelings excited by the representation, they connected the preceding act with that which immediately followed it, and rendered the whole spectacle uninterrupted and continuous. The music of the chorus was more rich and various, and the poetry more

[60] In the Oedipus Tyrannus, the chorus is composed of priests, senators, Theban youths, &c. Creon says to Oedipus,

Ει τωνδε χρηζεις πλησιαζοντων κλυειν,
Ετοιμος ειπειν ειτε και σειχειν εσω,

The answer is,

Ες παντας αυδᾶ, τωνδε γαρ πλεον φερω
Πενθος η και της εμης ψυχης περι.

Creon. Shall I speak in presence of this numerous assembly? or shall we retire?

Oedipus. Speak before all present; for the public distress afflicts me more than my own danger.

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elevated and glowing, than what could be admitted into the acts, or ordinary dialogue, which was confined to the iambic measure; circumstances which, together with the numbers, the dresses, the dances, and gestures, of these fancied spectators, equally increased the magnificence and variety of the entertainment. They likewise rendered it more affecting; since nothing is more proper to interest us in any scene, than the beholding a great number of persons deeply engaged by it, and expressing their feelings by natural tones and movements. But the principal advantage of the chorus was to furnish the poet with an opportunity (without loading the dialogue, and rendering it too sententious) of enforcing, by all the power of fancy and of numbers, that moral instruction, which was occasionally attempted by Æschylus and Sophocles, but which forms the continual end and aim of Euripides, who had a soul to feel, and a genius to express, whatever is most lovely and most excellent in sentiment and character. It is unnecessary to mention the affecting delicacy of Admetus and his attendants towards their guest Hercules; the lively emotions of gratitude in that hero; the friendship of Pylades and Orestes; the amiable picture of conjugal affection in the character of Alcestis, since the whole remains of that inestimable writer prove his unceasing labours to warm his countrymen with all the virtues and charities that adorn private life, as well as to keep alive an ardent love of the republic, and a generous passion for its glory and liberty;

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while, in several passages, he describes and refutes the philosophy of Epicurus[61] (which, as we have already observed, was chiefly borrowed from the licentious maxims of the Sophists) with such fulness and accuracy as entitled him to the appellation of the Philosophic Tragedian.

His views counteracted by the authors of the old comedy.

That Euripides, though ten years older than Socrates, owed the characteristic excellencies of his works to the conversation and friendship of that unrivalled moralist, is universally acknowledged by antiquity[62]; though the character and intentions both of the poet and the philosopher

[61] See particularly Alcest. ver. 782, &c. and ver. 960, &c.

Euripides flourished near an hundred years before Epicurus and Zeno, the respective founders of the Epicurean and Stoical philosophy. Yet we find the tenets of both sects in the tragedian; which may be easily explained, by considering that those opposite kinds of philosophy arose from different aspects of nature, which must often present themselves to an observing eye; and, as the doctrines of the Sophists laid the foundation for the immortal system of Epicurus, so the moderate doubt of Socrates, and the old academy, was corrupted into different degrees of scepticism, according to the fancy of their successors; and his rational preference of virtue to all other objects, degenerated into a pretended contempt for these objects, as things totally indifferent, the insensibility and pedantry of the Stoics.

[62] Εδοκει συμπρωειν Ευριπιδη. Diogen. Laert. in Vit. Socrat. The comic poets, who envied and hated Euripides, as the darling of the public, pretended that Socrates had even composed all the finest passages in his tragedies. Soon after the representation of the Troes, Mnesilochus parodied it in a farce, which he called Φρυγες, Phrygians, probably to have an opportuninity of playing on the word φρυγανων, fuel.

Φρυγες εσι καινον δραμα τουτ' Ευριπιδου
Ω και Σωκρατης τα φρυγανα υποτιθησι.

"The Phrygians is a new play of Euripides, to whom Socrates furnishes the fuel." But the pun cannot be translated. The same Mnesilochus calls Euripides a sort of hammerman to Socrates.

Ευριπιδης Σωκρατογομφευς.

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were grossly misrepresented by some of their contemporaries. Before the commencement, and during the continuance of the Peloponnesian war, there flourished at Athens a class of men who were the declared enemies, not only of Socrates and his disciples, but of all order and decency. The reader will easily perceive that I allude to Aristophanes, and the other writers of the old licentious comedy; an entertainment which was never carried to the same vicious excess in any other age or country. Yet this hideous spectre was the sister of tragedy, whose angelic sweetness and dignity were long accompanied by this odious and disgusting form; but to understand the natural connection between objects seemingly so different, it is necessary to remount to their source.

History of that licentious entertainment.

Tragedy, the song of the goat [63], and Comedy, the song of the village, sufficiently indicate, by the meanness of their ancient names, the humility of their first original. They arose amidst the sacrifices and joyous festivity of the vintage, in a country which seldom adopted the amusements, any more than the arts and institutions, of others, but which was destined to communicate her own to all the civilized portion of man-

[63] A goat, as the particular enemy of the vine, was very properly sacrificed to Bacchus, whose praises composed the song. In the Antigoné of Sophocles, v. 1127,

Πολυωνυμε Καδμειας
Νυμφας αγαλμα, και Διος
Βαρυβρεμετα γενος, &c.

we have a specimen of what formed the first business of tragedy.

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kind. During the entertainments of a season peculiarly dedicated to recreation and pleasure, the susceptible minds of the Greeks naturally yielded to two propensities, congenial to men in such circumstances, a disposition to exercise their sensibility, and a desire to amuse their fancy. Availing himself of the former, the sublime genius of Æschylus[64] improved the song of the goat into a regular dramatic poem, agreeing with the Iliad and Odyssey in those unalterable rules of design and execution which are essential to the perfection of every literary performance, yet differing from those immortal archetypes of art, in a circumstance naturally suggested by the occasion for which tragedies were composed. It had been usual with the Athenians, when they celebrated in the spring and autumn the great festivals of Bacchus, to personate the exploits and fables handed down by immemorial tradition concerning that bountiful divinity: this imitation was considered as a mark of gratitude due to the beneficence of the god, to whose honours they associated the kindred worship of Pan, Silenus, and their attendant fawns and satyrs. When Æschylus represented, therefore,

[64] Æschylus is said by Aristotle (de Arte Poetica) to have introduced interlocutors, dialogues, &c. which is acknowledging him the father of tragedy. We know little of Thespis, but from Horace:

Ignotum tragicæ genus invenisse camænæ
Dicitur, et plaustris vexisse poëmata Thespis.

The plaustrum, however, has a more direct reference to comedy; since λαλειν ἐπ ἁμαξης, to speak as from a cart, was a common Greek expression for gross indecent raillery.

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instead of simply reciting the real history, or agreeable fictions, of antiquity, he only adopted a mode of imitation already practised in the religious ceremonies of his country; a mode of imitation more powerful than the epic, since, instead of barely describing the deeds of gods and heroes, it shows those distinguished personages on the stage, makes them speak and act for themselves, and thus approaching nearer to reality, is still more forcible and affecting.

Its characteristics, as distinguished from tragedy,

As tragedy was introduced in imitation of the more serious scenes of the Dionysian festival, so comedy, which soon followed it, was owing to the more light and ludicrous parts of that solemnity.[65] Tragedy is the imitation of an important and serious action, adapted to affect the sensibility of the spectators, and to gratify their natural propensity to fear, to weep, and to wonder. Comedy is the imitation of a light and ludicrous action, calculated to amuse the fancy, and to gratify the natural disposition of men to laughter and merriment. Terror and pity have in all ages been regarded as the main springs of tragedy, because the laws of sensibility, founded

[65] Horace is authentic, and the most agreeable authority;

Agricolæ prisci, fortes, parvoque beati,
Condita post frumenta, levantes tempore festo
Corpus, et ipsum animum spe finis dura ferentem,
Cum sociis operum, pueris, et conjuge fidâ,
Tellurem porco, Silvanum lacte piabant,
Floribus et vino Genium, memorem brevis ævi.
Fescennina per hunc invecta licentia morem
Versibus alternis opprobria rustica fudit, &c. &c.

Epist. i. l. ii. v. 146; and still more directly Art. Poet. v. 220.

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solely in nature, are always the same. Comedy has been infinitely varied by the innumerable modes of wit, humour, and ridicule, which prevail in different ages and countries, and which agree scarcely in any one particular, unless it may be reckoned an agreement, that men have seldom indulged them, except at the expense of their good-nature, and often of their virtue. The Grecian comedy was uncommonly licentious; the profligate characters of Aristophanes and his contemporaries, Mnesilochus, Callias, Eupolis, and Cratinus, contributed, doubtless, to this deformity; yet these poets could not easily have rendered their new entertainment agreeable to the taste[66] and prejudices of the public, without incorporating in them the substance of the *phallic* songs[67], which constituted an ancient and essential part of the amusements of the vintage. The fond admirers of antiquity have defended the abominable strains of these licentious poets, by pretending that their intention was to reform vice, not to recommend it; an apology which, if admitted, might tend to exculpate the writers, but could never justify their performances, since it is known by experience, that lewd descrip-

[66] Horace has expressed, with his usual felicity, the situation of the spectators, and the fatal necessity of humouring it:

——— Asper,
Incolumi gravitate, jocum tentavit; eo quod
Illecebris erat et grata novitate morandus
Spectator, functusque sacris, et potus et exlex.

[67] Φαλλος, Priapus; ξυλον επιμηκες εχον εν τω ακρω σκυτινον αιδοιον. Suidas. This was carried in procession, accompanied with the Φαλλικα ασματα.

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tions prove a poison rather than a remedy; and instead of correcting manners, serve only to corrupt them.

and from modern comedy.

Besides the general licentiousness of the ancient comedy, its more particular characteristics resulted from the peculiar circumstances of the Athenians, during the time of its introduction and continuance. The people of all ranks at Athens were then too deeply engaged in the military and political transactions of their country, to enjoy any amusement which did not either directly flatter their passions, or bear an immediate relation to the great and important interests of the republic. It was during the confusion and calamities of the Peloponnesian war, that all the comic pieces which remain were originally represented; a period too disorderly and tumultuous to relish comedies, such as are now written, or such as were composed in Greece by Menander, in an age of greater moderation and tranquillity. The elegant and ingenious, the moral and instructive strains of Moliere or Menander, may amuse the idleness of wealth, and the security of peace. But amidst the fermentation of war and danger, amidst civil dissensions and foreign invasions, the minds of men are too little at ease to enjoy such refined and delicate beauties, which then appear lifeless and insipid. In such turbulent circumstances, the reluctant attention must be excited by real, instead of imaginary characters; by a true, instead of a fictitious event; by direct and particular advice concerning the actual state of their affairs, instead

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of vague or abstract lessons of wisdom and virtue. Coarse buffoonery may often force them to laugh; delicate ridicule will seldom persuade them to smile; they may be affected by the sharpness of personal invective, but will remain impenetrable to the shafts of general satire.

General notion of the pieces of Aristophanes.

By combining the different parts of this description, we may form a tolerably exact notion of the writings of Aristophanes, which commonly conceal, under a thin allegorical veil, the recent history of some public transaction, or the principal features of some distinguished character, represented in such a ludicrous light, as reflects on those concerned, unexpected, and often unmerited, but not therefore the less striking, flashes of insolent ridicule. Such was the nature, and such the materials of the ancient comedy, which, in its form, agreed entirely with tragedy, having borrowed from this entertainment (which was already in possession of the theatre) the design of the whole, as well as the configuration of the several parts; the music, the chorus, the dresses, decorations, and machinery; all of which were so modified and burlesqued as suited the purposes of the comic writer, and often rendered his pieces very exact parodies of the more fashionable tragedies of the times.

He and his associates encouraged at Athens by Pericles.

This singular species of drama, which, in its less perfect state, had long strolled the villages of Attica, was simply tolerated at Athens, until the profusion of Pericles, and his complaisance for the populace, first supplied from the exchequer the necessary expences for the represent-

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ation of comedies, and proposed prizes for the comic, as well as for the tragic, poets and actors. But, by this injudicious encouragement, he unwarily cherished a serpent in his bosom. Aristophanes and his licentious contemporaries having previously ridiculed virtue and genius, in the persons of Socrates and Euripides, boldly proceeded to avail themselves of the natural malignity of the vulgar, and their envy against whatever is elevated and illustrious, to traduce and calumniate Pericles himself; and though his successors in the administration justly merited (as we shall have occasion to relate) the severest lashes of invective, yet, had their characters been more pure, they would have been equally exposed to the unprovoked satire of those insolent buffoons, who gratified the gross appetites of the vulgar, by an undistinguished mass of ridicule, involving vice and virtue, things profane and sacred, men and gods.

The Grecian festivals.

Dramatic entertainments formed an essential part of the festivals consecrated to the bountiful author of the vine. Minerva, who had given not only the olive, but what was deemed far more valuable, her peculiar protection to the city of Athens, was rewarded with innumerable solemnities. Jupiter enjoyed his appropriate honours; but more commonly, as it is attested by Athenian medals, the worship of the father of the gods was associated with that of his wise and warlike daughter. We shall have occasion to speak more particularly of the festival and mysteries of Ceres, who taught the Athenians the important knowledge of agriculture, which

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hey were supposed to have diffused over the ancient world. It would be endless to mention he institutions in honour of the crowd of inerior or less propitious divinities, which rened the festivals at Athens far more numerous han in any other Grecian city. Nor did their frequency abate any thing of the extensive splendour which accompanied them. The shops and courts of justice were shut; the mechanic quitted his tools, the husbandman ceased from his labours, the mourner intermitted his sorrow. The whole city was dissolved in feasting and jollity; the intervals of which were filled up by pompous shows and processions, by concerts of music, by exhibitions of painting; and at several festivals, particularly the Panathenæan, by hearing and judging the noblest productions of eloquence and poetry.[68] We shall have occasion to mention some particular ceremonies of a more melancholy cast; but the general character of the Grecian religion was as cheerful and attractive, as the superstition of the Egyptians, from whom they are ignorantly supposed to have borrowed it, was gloomy and forbidding. Even the Egyptian hymns consisted in dismal complaints and lamentations[69]; the Grecian solemnities concluded with songs of joy and exultation. The feasts which followed the sacrifices were enriched by all the delicacies and luxuries of the ancient world; and, to use the words of Aristotle, many persons thought it their duty, at those religious

the splendour with which they were celebrated.

[68] Isocrat. Panegyr. et Panathen.

[69] Apuleius de Genio Socratis.

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entertainments; to get drunk in honour of the gods.[70]

Manners of the Athenians in private life.

It seems extraordinary, that the revenues of Athens, notwithstanding their improvement by Pericles, should have sufficed for this multitude of expenses. But we must consider that the general simplicity of manners in private life, formed a striking contrast with the extravagance of public festivals and amusements. The houses and tables of the most wealthy Athenians were little distinguished above those of their poorest neighbours. Pericles himself, though never suspected of avarice, lived with the exactest œconomy; and the superabundance of private wealth, which would have created envy and danger to the owner, if he had employed it for his particular convenience and pleasure, procured him public gratitude and esteem, when expended for the satisfaction of the multitude.

Condition of the female sex.

For reasons which will immediately appear, we have not hitherto found it necessary to describe the manners and influence of the Grecian women; but the character and condition of the fair sex will throw light on the preceding observations in this chapter, and present the most striking contrast of any to be met with in history. If we knew not the consideration in which women were anciently held in Greece, and the advantage which they enjoyed at Sparta, after the laws of Lycurgus had revived the institutions of the heroic ages[71], we should be apt to suspect that

[70] Aristot. Ethic. ad Nicom. l. viii. c. 3.
[71] Aristot. Politic. l. ii. p 105.

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the ungenerous treatment of the feebler sex, which afterwards so universally prevailed, had been derived from the Egyptian and Asiatic colonies, which early settled in that part of Europe. Excluded from social intercourse, which nature had fitted them to adorn, the Grecian women were rigorously confined to the most retired apartments of the family, and employed in the meanest offices of domestic œconomy. It was thought indecent for them to venture abroad, unless to attend a procession, to accompany a funeral[72], or to assist at certain other religious solemnities. Even on these occasions, their behaviour was attentively watched, and often malignantly interpreted. The most innocent freedom was construed into a breach of decorum; and their reputation, once sullied by the slightest imprudence, could never afterwards be retrieved. If such unreasonable severities had proceeded from that absurd jealousy which sometimes accompanies a violent love, and of which a certain degree is nearly connected with the delicacy of passion between the sexes, the condition of the Grecian women, though little less miserable, would have been far less contemptible. But the Greeks were utter strangers to that refinement of sentiment[73], which, in the ages of chivalry, and which still, in some southern countries of Europe, renders women the objects of a suspicious, but respectful passion, and leads men to gratify their vanity at the expense of their freedom. Married or unmarried, the Grecian fe-

[72] Lysias, p. 120. [73] Idem. p. 435.

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males were kept in equal restraint: no pains were taken to render them, at any one period of their lives, agreeable members of society; and their education was either entirely neglected, or confined at least to such humble objects as, instead of elevating and enlarging the mind, tended only to narrow and to debase it.[74] Though neither qualified for holding an honourable rank in society, nor permitted to enjoy the company even of their nearest relations, they were thought capable of superintending or performing the drudgery of domestic labour, of acting as stewards for their husbands, and thus relieving men from a multiplicity of little cares, which seemed unworthy of their attention, and unsuitable to their dignity. The whole burthen of such mercenary cares being imposed on the women, their first education and early habits were adapted to that lowly rank, beyond which they could never afterwards aspire.[75] Nothing was allowed to divert their minds from those servile occupations in which it was intended that their whole lives should be spent; no liberal idea was presented to their imagination, that might raise them above the ignoble arts in which they were ever destined to labour; the smallest familiarity with strangers was deemed a dangerous offence; and any intimacy or acquaintance beyond the walls of their own family, a heinous crime; since it might engage them to embezzle the furniture and effects committed to their care and custody. Even the

[74] See Aristotle's character of women, Hist. Animal. l. ix. c. 1.

[75] Xenoph. Memorab. l. v. passim, particularly Socrates's Discourse with Ischomachus.

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laws of Athens confirmed this miserable degradation of women, holding the security of the husband's property a matter of greater importance than defending the wife's person from outrage, and protecting her character from infamy.[76] By such illiberal institutions were the most amiable part of the human species insulted, among a people in other respects the most improved of all antiquity. They were totally debarred from those refined arts and elegant entertainments, to which their agreeable qualities might have added a new charm. Instead of directing the taste, and enlivening the pleasures of society, their value was estimated, like that of the ignoblest objects, merely by profit or utility. Their chief virtue was reserve, and their point of honour, œconomy.

Grecian courtezans;

The extreme depression of women levelled the natural inequalities of their temper and disposition; the prude, the coquette, with the various intermediate shades of female character, disappeared; and all the modest and virtuous part of the sex (if virtue and modesty can ever be the effects of restraint) were reduced to humble imitation and insipid uniformity. But, in the time of Pericles, there appeared and flourished at Athens a bolder class of females, who divested themselves of the natural modesty, disdained the artificial virtues, and avenged the violated privileges of their sex. Asia, the mother of voluptuousness, produced this dangerous brood, whose meretricious arts and occupations met

[76] See the laws, quoted by Lysias, explained in my Introductory Discourse to that orator, p. 100.

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with no check or restraint from the laxity of Ionian morals, and were even promoted and encouraged by the corruptions of Pagan superstition. In most of the Greek colonies of Asia, temples were erected to the *earthly* Venus; where courtezans were not merely tolerated, but honoured as priestesses of that condescending divinity.[77] The wealthy and commercial city of Corinth first imported this innovation from the East; and such is the extravagance of the human mind, that after the repulse of Xerxes, the magistrates of that republic ascribed the safety of their country to the powerful intercession of the votaries of Venus, whose portraits they caused to be painted at the public expense, as the Athenians had done those of the warriors who gained the battle of Marathon.[78] The fame of all those accomplished, but mercenary beauties, though highly celebrated by the poets and historians of the times, was eclipsed by the splendour of Aspasia of Miletus, who settled at Athens under the administration of Pericles, and is said to have embarked in the fleet with which that fortunate commander subdued the powerful and wealthy island of Samos. The personal character of Aspasia gave temporary lustre to a profession, which, though exalted by the casual caprices of superstition, must, from its native odiousness, have fallen into disgrace, since later writers among the Greeks[79] acknowledge, that though she carried on a very dishonourable commerce in female virtue, yet her wit and elo-

their artifices and influence.

[77] Athenæus, l. xiii. & Plutarch, p. 637.

[78] Simonides apud Athen. l. xiii.

[79] Plutarch. in Pericle.

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quence, still more than her beauty, gained her extraordinary consideration among all ranks in the republic. The susceptible minds of the Athenians were delighted with what their absurd institutions rendered a novelty, the beholding the native graces of the sex, embellished by education. Aspasia is said to have acquired a powerful ascendant over Pericles himself; she certainly acquired his protection and friendship; which is less extraordinary than that her conversation and company should have pleased the discernment of the sage Socrates. She is accused (as we shall afterwards have an opportunity to mention) of having excited, from motives of personal resentment, the war of Peloponnesus; yet, calamitous as that long and obstinate conflict proved to Greece, and particularly to Athens, it may be suspected that Aspasia occasioned still more incurable evils to both. Her example, and still more her instructions, formed a seminary at Athens, by which her dangerous profession was reduced into method. The companions of Aspasia served as models for painting and statuary, and themes for poetry and panegyric. Nor were they merely the objects, but the authors of many literary works, in which they established rules for the behaviour of their lovers, particularly at table; and explained the various arts for gaining the heart, and captivating the affections[80]; which would have been in them an imprudence, had they not considered, that the mysteries of *their*

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[80] Athenæus, ibid.

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calling alone lose little by disclosure, since men may often perceive the snare, without having courage to avoid it. The dress, behaviour, and artifices of this class of women, became continually more seductive and dangerous; and Athens thenceforth remained the chief school of vice and pleasure, as well as of literature and philosophy.

It has been already hinted, that the fine arts, and particularly painting, were prostituted to the honour of harlots, and the purposes of voluptuousness. Licentious pictures are mentioned by ancient writers as a general source of corruption, and considered as the first ambush that beset the safety of youth and innocence.[81] Yet this unhappy effect of the arts was only the vapour that accompanies the sun; since painting, architecture, and above all, statuary, attained their meridian splendour in the age of Pericles; and shed peculiar glory on this period of Athenian history, not only by the powers of genius which they displayed, but by the noble purposes to which they were directed. But the arts of design form so important a subject, that they merit to be examined apart in the following chapter.

[81] Euripid. in Hippolyt.

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History of the Arts of Design. — Superiority of the Greeks in those Arts. — Causes of that Superiority — Among the Asiatic Greeks — Who communicated their Inventions to Europe. — Bathycles the Magnesian — Dipenus and Scillis — Imitated in Greece, Italy, and Sicily. — The Athenians surpass their Masters. — Sublime Style of Art. — Works of Phidias, Polygnotus, &c. — Characteristic Excellence of Grecian Art. — Different Impressions made by Painters and Poets — Depended on the Nature of their respective Arts.

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History of the arts of design.

THAT the history of arts has been less cultivated than that of arms and politics, is a general and just complaint, to which writers will seldom be inclined to pay regard, because they will always find it an easier task to relate wars and negociations, debates and battles, than to describe the gradual and almost imperceptible progress of genius and taste, in works of elegance and beauty.

The origin of the imitative[1] arts (so congenial is imitation to man) reaches beyond the limits of

[1] Concerning the arts of the Greeks, the most copious materials are furnished by Pausanias throughout; and by the 34th and 35th books of Pliny. The best modern guides are Winckelman and Lessing in German, and Caylus in French. Many important errors of Winckelman are detected by the learned professor Heyne, in his Antiquarische Abhandlungen.

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profane history; and to dispute who were their inventors, is only to examine what nation is the most ancient. In this respect, the Egyptians and Phœnicians merit, doubtless, the pre-eminence. From the earliest ages of Heathen antiquity, both these nations seem to have cultivated the arts of design. In the remotest periods of their history, the Egyptians engraved on precious stones, and strove to render their public transactions immortal, by recording them in hieroglyphics, on the hardest bazaltes; nor can we sufficiently admire the perfection to which the patience of that laborious people had carried the mechanical part of sculpture, before the Persian conquest, and the reign of Cambyses. But beauty, the essence and the end of art, was never studied by the natives of either Phœnicia or Egypt, who faithfully copied their national features, without attempting to improve them; until the traces of Grecian conquest and colonization appeared in the medals of the Ptolemies, particularly those with the head of Jupiter Ammon.

Superiority of the Greeks in those arts.

Allowance, doubtless, must be made for the prejudices of national vanity, when Euripides, Aristotle, and Epicurus, endeavour to persuade us, that the clear skies, and happy temperature of Greece, engendered a peculiar aptitude for arts, letters, and philosophy. The testimony, however, of modern travellers confirms the evidence of antiquity, that the shores and islands of the Archipelago produce more elegant and liberal forms, and features more animated and expressive, with fewer individual imperfections, and more of gene-

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ral nature, than can be found in any other divisions of the world.[2] Yet whatever the Greeks owed to their skies and climate, they were probably not less indebted to their laborious education and active mode of life, and to the manly spirit of their religious, civil, and military institutions. Long before the invasion of Xerxes, the Grecian sculpture was distinguished by an air of majesty peculiar to itself[3]; and the awful images of the gods, as yet rudely finished, displayed a grandeur and sublimity of expression, that delighted and astonished the best judges, in the most refined ages of art.[4]

Causes of that superiority,

This singularity might be expected from the description already given of the religion and manners of Greece, and from the inimitable excellence of its poet-musicans and poets. The divinities of Greece being imagined of the human form, though incomparably more noble and perfect, artists would naturally begin at a very early period[5], to exalt and generalise their conceptions. The bold enthusiasm of poetry served to elevate and support their flight, and the native country of Homer was the first scene of their success, the happy climate of Ionia rendering

[2] Belon. Observat. l. ii. 34.

[3] Pausan. Corinth. l. ii. 34. [4] Plato & Aristot. passim.

[5] We omit the fabulous account of Dedalus the Athenian, who is said to have flourished in the time of Hercules and Theseus, and forty years before the Trojan war. It has been already proved that during the heroic ages, the Greeks paid no adoration to statues. Athenian writers, who lived a thousand years after that period, might easily confound the supposed works of the ancient Dedalus with those of Dedalus of Sicyon, especially since the error was extremely flattering to their national vanity.

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frequent and *natural*, in that delightful region, those beautiful and lovely forms which are elsewhere merely *ideal*, while other circumstances concurred to accelerate the progress of invention and genius in that highly-favoured country.

among the Asiatic Greeks;

In the eighth century before the Christian æra, the Asiatic colonies, as we already had occasion to explain, far surpassed their mother country in splendour and prosperity. For this pre-eminence, they were indebted to the superior fertility of their soil, the number and convenience of their harbours, the advantages of their situation and climate, the vicinity of the most wealthy and refined nations in Asia; above all, to their persevering diligence and ingenuity, by which they not only improved and ennobled the arts derived from the Lydians and Phrygians, but invented others long peculiar to themselves, particularly painting, sculpture in marble, together with the Doric and Ionic orders of architecture.

who communicated their inventions to Europe.

In the seventh century before Christ, the magnificent presents which the far-famed oracle of Apollo received from the superstition or vanity of the Lydian kings, were the productions, not of Egyptian or Phœnician, but of Ionian artists; and, during both that and the following century, the Ionians diffused the elegant inventions of their country through the dominions of their ancestors in Europe. Alarmed by the inroads of the Cimmerians, and disturbed by the continual hostility of Lydia, many Eastern artists sought refuge in the commercial cities of Ægina, Sicyon, and Corinth, where the peaceful spirit of the inha-

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bitants, comparatively wealthy and luxurious, afforded those ingenious strangers both encouragement and security.

Bathycles, the Magnesian.

The Asiatic fugitives, however, did not confine themselves to those secondary republics. Bathycles, a native of Ionian Magnesia, a place early celebrated for painting[6], fixed his abode in Sparta, the most considerable community in Greece. By order of the magistrates of that illustrious republic, he made the throne of Amyclæan Apollo, the statue of Diana Leucophryné, the figures of the Graces and Horæ, and all the other gifts and ornaments inclosed within the consecrated ground surrounding the temple of Amyclæ. The statue of Apollo, thirty cubits high, seemed to be the work of an ignorant sculptor, and probably was the production of a far earlier age than that of Bathycles. But whoever considers the colossean bulk of the principal figure, the base of which was formed into an altar containing the tomb of Hyacinth, must admire the proportional magnitude of his throne, both sides of which were adorned with sculpture.[7] Among these ornaments, many subjects

The throne of Amyclæan Apollo.

[6] Plin. l. xxxv. I call it Ionian Magnesia, to distinguish it from other places of the same name. Vid. Plin. edit. Berolin. tom. i. p. 167. & tom. iii. p. 136. 139. & 255.

[7] Winkleman, who scarcely mentions the throne of Amyclæan Apollo, though undoubtedly the greatest ancient monument in Greece, confounds Bathycles the Magnesian with a later artist of the same name, who made the celebrated cup which the seven sages modestly sent one to the other, as most worthy of such a present, and which was finally consecrated to Delphian Apollo. Diogenes Laertius, speaking on this subject, says, Βαθυκλεα τινα Αρκαδα; and that he was an Arcadian appears also from Plut. in Solon. & Casaubon, ad Athenæum, l. xi. 4.

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of history or fable are mentioned by Pausanias, which bear not any known relation to Apollo or Hyacinth, to Bathycles or the Spartans; but the top of the throne contained a chorus of Magnesians, supposed to represent the artists who assisted in the execution of this stupendous work. The altar represented a celestial group; Minerva, Venus, Diana, and several other divinities, conveying Hyacinth to the skies. Its sides were adorned with the combat of Tyndareus and Eurytus; the exploits of Castor and Pollux; and the extraordinary scene between Menelaus and the Egyptian Proteus, as described in the Odyssey.[8] Nor was this the only subject copied from the divine bard. It was easy to distinguish his favourite Demodocus singing among a chorus of Phæatians; a circumstance confirming our observations in a former part of this work, that the poems of Homer were generally known in Sparta long before they had been collected by the Athenian tyrant Pisistratus.

Dipenus and Scillus.

Nearly six centuries before the Christian æra, the Cretans, Dipenus and Scillus, adorned many Grecian cities in Europe as well as in Asia; and about fifty years afterwards, the Chians, Bupalus and Anthermus, diffused over Greece those precious works in Parian marble, which were highly admired in the age of Augustus.[9] About the same time, Polydorus of Samos, who seems to have been much employed by Crœsus, the last king of Lydia, made the famous ring for the

[8] Pausan. Lacon. p. 196. & seq.
[9] Vid. Plin. l. xxxvi. § 4.

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Samian tyrant Polycrates, which is extolled by Pliny[10] as a master-piece of art.

Their works imitated in Greece, Italy, and Sicily.

The productions of those Eastern artists were imitated with successful emulation by their disciples in ancient Greece, and likewise by the Grecian colonies in Italy and Sicily; as sufficiently appears from the medals of these last-mentioned countries. These more durable monuments, however, can afford but an imperfect idea of the innumerable statues which were formed of tuf or gravel stone[11], and of various kinds of wood. The most esteemed were made of ivory, which, like the teeth of other animals, calcines under ground; an unfortunate circumstance for the arts, since, before the invasion of Xerxes, Greece could boast an hundred ivory statues of the gods, all of a colossean magnitude, and many of them covered with gold.[12] The white marbles of Paros, together with those of Cyprus and Ægina, furnished the chief materials for sculpture, before the Athenians opened the hard sparkling veins of Mount Pentelicus. Ebony, cypress, and other kinds of wood, were gradually brought into use, in consequence of the more general diffusion of the art, which was destined not only to represent gods and heroes, but to commemorate the useful merit of illustrious citizens.[13] At the four sacred festivals common to the Grecian name, the victors in the gymnastic exercises, as well as in the musical and poetical entertainments, were frequently

[10] L. xxxvii. § 4.
[11] Plut. in Vit. Andoc.
[12] Pausanias.
[13] Lucian. Imagin.

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distinguished by the honour of a statue. The scenes of those admired solemnities, thus became the principal repositories of sculpture; and the cities of Delphi and Olympia, in particular, long surpassed the rest of Greece in the number and value of their statues, as well as in the splendour and magnificence of all their other ornaments. [14]

The Athenians surpass their masters.

But the time approached when these cities themselves were to be eclipsed by the lustre of Athens, which, in the course of forty years, became the seat not only of opulence, power, and politics, but of literature, philosophy, and the fine arts, and thenceforth continued to be deemed the sovereign of Greece, rather than the capital of the narrow and unfruitful territory of Attica. During that memorable period, the Athenians, whose circumstances had hitherto proved little favourable to the progress of taste and elegance, acquired unrivalled power and renown. Having defeated and disgraced the arms, they plundered the wealth of Persia. Their valour gave them possession of those maritime provinces of Lower Asia, which were justly regarded as the cradle of the arts. Their magnanimity and firmness commanded respect abroad, and ensured pre-eminence in Greece; while, by a rare felicity, their republic, amidst this uninterrupted flow of external prosperity, produced men qualified to improve the gifts of valour or fortune to the solid and permament glory of their country.

Athenian artists,

It is difficult to determine whether the dis-

[14] Pausanias Phocic. and Eliac.

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cerning encouragement of Pericles was more useful in animating the industry of Phidias, or the genius of Phidias in seconding the views of his illustrious protector. Their congenial minds seemed as happily formed for each other, as both were admirably adapted to the flourishing circumstances of their country. In the language of Plutarch [15], this great *minister*, whose virtues gradually rendered him the *master* of the republic, found Athens well furnished with marble, brass, ivory, gold, ebony, and cypress, together with all the other materials fitted to adorn a city, which, having raised to the glory of empire, he wished farther to immortalise as the model of elegance. According to the popular principles which he professed, he deemed it the duty of a statesman to provide not merely for the army, the navy, the judges, and others immediately employed in the public service: the great body of the people he regarded as the constant and most important object of his ministerial care. The immense revenues of the state, which had hitherto been chiefly squandered in shows and festivals, in gaudy ostentation and perishing luxury, he directed to objects more solid and durable, which, while they embellished the city, might exercise the industry and display the talents of the citizens. Guided by such motives, he boldly opened the treasury, and expended about four thousand talents; a sum which then might command as much labour as six or seven millions sterling in the present age. By this

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conspire with the views of Pericles.

[15] Plut. in Pericle.

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liberal encouragement, he animated every art, excited every hand, enlivened every exertion, and called forth into the public service the whole dexterity, skill, and genius of his countrymen; while the motives of gain or glory which he proposed, allured from all quarters the most ingenious strangers, who readily transported their talents to Athens, as to the best market, and most conspicuous theatre.

Sublime style of art,

But it was the peculiar felicity of Pericles, to find Athens provided not only with all the materials of art, but with artists capable of employing them to the best advantage. In the inaccurate, but often expressive, language of Pliny, sculpture and painting then first arose, under the plastic hands of Phidias and his brother Panænus. Both arts, however, are known to have existed at an earlier date; but in the age of Pericles, they first assumed their proper elevation and due honours. The inventive genius of man tried a new and nobler flight. The superiority of Phidias and his contemporaries obscured, and almost obliterated, the memory of their predecessors, and produced that sublime style of art, which, having flourished about an hundred and fifty years, decayed with the glory of Greece, and disappeared soon after the reign of Alexander.

compared with that preceding it.

It appears from the gems and medals, and the few remains in marble, preceding the age of Pericles, that the mechanical part of engraving and sculpture had already attained a high degree of perfection. In many of those works, the minutest ornaments are finished with care, the mus-

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cles are boldly pronounced, the outline is faithful; but the design has more hardness than energy, the attitudes are too constrained to be graceful, and the strength of the expression distorts, and for the most part destroys, beauty. The sculptors Phidias, Polycletus, Scopas, Alcamenes, and Myron, together with the contemporary painters, Panænus, Zeuxis, and Parrhasius, softened the asperities of their predecessors [16], rendered their contours more flowing and more natural, and by employing greater address to conceal the mechanism of their art, displayed superior skill to the judgment and afforded higher delight to the fancy, in proportion as less care and labour appeared visible to the eye. In the works of these admired artists, the expression was skilfully diffused through every part, without disturbing the harmony of the whole. Pain and sorrow were rather concentrated in the soul than displayed on the countenance; and even the more turbulent passions of indignation, anger, and resentment, were so tempered and ennobled, that the indications of them became consistent with attractive grace and sublime beauty. But the triumph of art consisted in representing and recommending the social affections; for setting aside the unwarranted assertions of Pliny, in his pretended epochs of painting, it appears from much higher authority, that as early as the age of Socrates, painters had discerned and attained that admired excellence of style, which has been called in modern times the manner of Raphael;

[16] Plut. in Pericl. & Quintilian, l. xii. c. 10. p. 578.

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and had learned to express, by the outward air, attitudes, and features, whatever (in the words of Xenophon[17]) is most engaging, affectionate, sweet, attractive, and amiable, in the inward sentiments and character. Of these Grecian paintings, indeed, which were chiefly on wood, and other perishing materials, no vestige remains; but the statuary of that celebrated age, while it displays its own excellence, is sufficient to redeem from oblivion (as far at least as invention, expression, and ideal beauty, are concerned) the obliterated charms of the sister art.

The works of Phidias. Olymp. lxxxiii. 4. A. C. 445.

In statuary, the superior merit of Phidias was acknowledged by the unanimous admiration of independent and rival communities. Intrusted by Pericles with the superintendence of the public works, his own hands added to them their last and most valuable ornaments. Before he was called to this honourable employment, his statues had adorned the most celebrated temples of Greece. His Olympian Jupiter we had already occasion to describe. In the awful temple of Delphi, strangers admired his bronze statues of Apollo and Diana. He likewise made for the Delphians a group of twelve Grecian heroes, surrounding a figure of brass, that represented the Trojan horse. His admired statue of the goddess Nemesis, or Vengeance, was formed from a block of marble, which the vain confidence of the Persians transported to Marathon for a trophy of victory, but which their disgraceful and precipitate flight left for a monument of their

[17] See the conversation of Socrates with the painter Parrhasius, in Memorab. l. iii.

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cowardice on the Marathonian shore. The grateful piety of Greece adored his Venus Urania, and Parthenopean Apollo. His three Minervas were respectively made for the Pallenians, Platæans, and Lemnians; and all three were presented by those tributary states to their Athenian protectors and sovereigns. These inimitable works silenced the voice of envy. The most distinguished artists of Greece; sculptors, painters, and architects, were ambitious to receive the directions, and to second the labours, of Phidias, which were uninterruptedly employed, during fifteen years, in the embellishment of his native city. A. C. 455—430.

The Odeum, Parthenon, and Propylæa.

During that short period he completed the Odeum, or theatre of music; the Parthenon, or temple of Minerva; the Propylæa, or vestibule, and porticoes belonging to the citadel, together with the sculptured and picturesque ornaments of these and other immortal works; which, when new (as Plutarch finely observes), expressed the mellowed beauties of time and maturity; and when old, still preserved the fresh charms and alluring graces of novelty. The Parthenon, which still remains, attests the justice of this panegyric. It is two hundred and seventeen feet nine inches long, composed of beautiful white marble, and acknowledged by modern travellers [18] to be the noblest piece of antiquity existing in the world. It appears at first sight extraordinary, that the expense of two thousand talents should have been bestowed on the Propylæa. [19] But we must consider, that this ex-

[18] Sir George Wheeler's Travels, &c.

[19] Plutarch. in Pericle, & Demosth. p. 71.

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tensive name comprehended the temple of Minerva, the treasury, and other public edifices.

Works of Panænus, Polygnotus, and Micon.

The Pœcile, or diversified portico, which was painted by Panænus, the brother of Phidias, assisted by Polygnotus and Micon, must have been a work of great time and expense. Its front and ceilings were of marble, like those of all the other porticoes leading to the citadel, which still remained in the time of Pausanias, and were regarded, both on account of the workmanship and materials, as superior to any thing extant. In the Pœcile, those great painters, whose merit Pliny[20] forgets in his inaccurate epochs of art, had represented the most illustrious events of Grecian history; the victory of Theseus over the Amazons, the sacking of Troy, and particularly the recent exploits against the Persians. In the battle of Marathon, the Athenian and Platæan heroes were drawn from the life, or more probably from the innumerable statues which preserved the faithful lineaments of such admired patriots. The whole extent of the Acropolis, above six miles in circumference, was so diversified by works of painting and statuary, that it is described as exhibiting one continued scene of elegance and beauty.

The Minerva in the Acropolis.

But all these ornaments were surpassed by one production of Phidias, which probably was the last of that great master. His admired statue of Minerva, the erecting of which served to consecrate the Parthenon, was composed of gold and ivory, twenty-six cubits high, being of inferior

[20] He places the first epoch of great painters in the 90th Olymp. A. C. 420.

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dimensions to his Minerva Poliades of bronze, the spear and crest of which was seen from the promontory of Sunium[21], at twenty-five miles' distance. Parrhasius had painted the ornaments of the latter[22]; Phidias himself adorned every part of the former; and the compliment which, in his favourite work, he took an opportunity of paying to the merit of Pericles, occasioned (as we shall have occasion to explain[23]) his own banishment, a disgrace which he seems not to have long survived. Cicero, Plutarch, Pliny, and Pausanias, had seen and admired this invaluable monument of piety, as well as genius, since the Minerva of Phidias increased the devotion of Athens towards her protecting divinity. It belonged only to those who had seen and studied, to describe such master-pieces of art; and as they exist no more, it will better suit the design of this history to confine ourselves to such works as we ourselves have seen, and which are generally acknowledged to bear the impression of the Socratic age, when philosophy gave law to painting and sculpture, as well as to poetry and eloquence.

Characteristic excellence of Grecian art.

Were it allowed to make the melancholy supposition, that all the monuments of Grecian literature had perished in the general wreck of their nation and liberty, and that posterity could collect nothing farther concerning this celebrated people, but what appeared from the Apollo Belvidere, the groupes of the Laocoon and Niobé, and other statues, gems, or medals, now scattered

[21] Pausanias Attic.
[22] Idem, ibid.
[23] Plutarch. in Peric. & Thucydid. l. ii.

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over Italy and Europe, what opinion would mankind form of the genius and character of the Greeks? would it correspond with the impressions made by their poets, orators, and historians? which impression would be most favourable? and what would be the precise difference between them? The solution of these questions will throw much light on the present subject.

Circumstances in which it agreed with poetry and eloquence.

The first observation that occurs on the most superficial, and that is strongly confirmed by a more attentive, survey of the ancient marbles, is, that their authors perfectly understood proportion, anatomy, the art of clothing without concealing, the naked figure, and whatever contributes to the justness and truth of design. The exact knowledge of form is as necessary to the painter or statuary, whose business it is to represent *bodies*, as that of language to the poet or historian who undertakes to describe *actions*. In this particular, it would be unnecessary to institute a comparison between Grecian writers and Grecian artists, since they are both acknowledged as perfect in their respective kinds, as the condition of humanity renders possible.

The expression of passions, sentiments, and character, in the works of poets and orators;

But when we advance a step farther, and consider the expression of passions, sentiments, and character, we find an extraordinary difference, or rather contrariety. Homer, Sophocles, and Demosthenes, are not only the most original, but the most animated and most glowing of all writers. Every sentence is energetic; all the parts are in motion; the passions are described in their utmost fury, and expressed by the boldest words and gestures. To keep to the tragic poet,

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whose art approaches the nearest to painting and sculpture, the heroes, and even the gods of Sophocles, frequently display the impetuosity of the most ungoverned natures; and, what is still more extraordinary, sometimes betray a momentary weakness, extremely inconsistent with their general character. The rocks of Lemnos resound with the cries of Philoctetes; Oedipus, yielding to despair, plucks out his eyes; even Hercules, the model of fortitude, sinks under the impressions of pain or sorrow. CHAP. XIV.

Nothing can be more opposite to the conduct of Grecian artists. *They* likewise have represented Philoctetes; but instead of effeminate tears and degrading lamentations, have ascribed to him the patient concentrated woe of a suffering hero. The furious Ajax of Timomachus was painted, not in the moment when he destroyed the harmless sheep instead of the hostile Greeks, but after he had committed this mad deed, and when his rage having subsided, he remained, like the sea after a storm, surrounded with the scattered fragments of mangled carcases, and reflecting with the silent anguish of despair on his useless and frantic brutality. The revenge of Medea against her husband was not represented, as in Euripides, butchering her innocent children, but while she was still wavering and irresolute, agitated between resentment and pity. Even Clytemnestra, whose unnatural, intrepid cruelty, poets and historians had so indignantly described and arraigned, was not deemed a proper subject for the pencil, when embruing her hands in the

in those of painters and statuaries;

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blood of Agamemnon. And although this may be referred to a rule of Aristotle, "that the characters of women should not be represented as too daring or too decisive;" yet we shall find on examination, that it results from principles of nature, whose authority is still more universal and more imperious. The consideration of the Apollo, Niobé, and Laocoon, whose copies have been infinitely multiplied, and are familiarly known, will set this matter in the clearest point of view.

Illustrated by the Apollo Belvidere;

The Apollo Belvidere is universally felt and acknowledged to be the sublimest figure that either skill can execute, or imagination conceive. That favourite divinity, whom ancient poets seem peculiarly fond of describing in the warmest colours[24], is represented in the attitude of darting the fatal arrow against the serpent Pytho, or the giant Tityus. Animated by the boldest conception of heavenly powers, the artist has far outstepped the perfections of humanity, and (if may speak without irreverence) made the corrupt put on incorruption, and the mortal immortality. His stature is above the human, his attitude majestic; the Elysian spring of youth softens the manly graces of his person, and the bold structure of his limbs. Disdain sits on his lips, and indignation swells his nostrils; but an unalterable serenity invests his front, and the sublime elevation of his aspect aspires at deeds of renown still surpassing the present object of his victory.

[24] Horace, b. iii. ode 4. ver. 60.

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The irascible passions are not represented with more dignity in the Apollo, than are those of fear, terror, and consternation, in the Niobé. This group contained Niobé and her husband Amphion, with seven sons, and as many daughters. Their melancholy story, which is too well known [25] to be related here, required the deepest expression; and the genius of the artist has chosen the only moment when this expression could be rendered consistent with the highest beauty; a beauty not flattering the senses by images of pleasure, but transporting the fancy into regions of purity and virtue. The excess and suddenness of their disaster occasioned a degree of amazement and horror, which, suspending the faculties, involved them in that silence and insensibility, which neither breaks out into lamentable shrieks, nor distorts the countenance, but which leaves full play to the artist's skill in representing motion without disorder, or, in other words, in rendering expression graceful.

by the group of Niobé;

The Laocoon may be regarded as the triumph of Grecian sculpture; since bodily pain, the grossest and most ungovernable of all our passions, and that pain united with anguish and torture of mind, are yet expressed with such propriety and dignity, as afford lessons of fortitude more impressive than any taught in the schools of philosophy. The horrible shriek, which Virgil's Laocoon [26] emits, is a proper cir-

and by that of the Laocoon.

[25] Ovid. Metamorph. l. vi. ver. 146. & seq.

[26] Æneid. l. ii. ver. 222.

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cumstance for poetry, which speaks to the fancy by images and ideas borrowed from all the senses, and has a thousand ways of ennobling its object; but the expression of this shriek would have totally degraded the statue. It is softened, therefore, into a patient sigh, with eyes turned to heaven in search of relief. The intolerable agony of suffering nature is represented in the lower part, and particularly in the extremities of the body; but the manly breast struggles against calamity. The contention is still more plainly perceived in his furrowed forehead; and his languishing paternal eye demands assistance, less for himself, than for his miserable children, who look up to him for help.

Different impression made by the same objects, as exhibited by poets and painters,

If subjects of this affecting nature are expressed without appearing hideous, shocking, or disgustful, we may well suppose that more temperate passions are represented with the greatest moderation and dignity. The remark is justified by examining the remains or faithful copies of Grecian art; and were we to deduce from these alone the character of the nation, it would seem, at first sight, that the contemporaries of Pericles must have been a very superior people in point of fortitude, self-command, and every branch of practical philosophy, to the Athenians who are described by poets and historians.

founded in the different nature of their respective arts.

But when we consider the matter more deeply, we shall find that it is the business of history to describe men as they are; of poetry and painting, to represent them as may afford most pleasure and instruction to the reader or spectator.

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The aim of these imitative arts is the same, but they differ widely in the mode, the object, and extent, of their imitation. The poet who describes *actions* in *time*, may carry the reader through all the gradations of passion; and in exhibiting its most furious excess his genius is most powerfully displayed. But the painter or statuary, who represents *bodies* in *space*, is confined to one moment, and must choose that which leaves the freest play to the imagination. This can seldom be the highest pitch of passion, which leaves nothing beyond it; and in contemplating which, the sympathy of the spectator, after his first surprise subsides, can only descend into indifference. Every violent situation, moreover, is perceived not to be durable; and all extreme perturbation is inconsistent with beauty, without which no visible object can long continue either powerfully attractive or highly pleasing. [27]

[27] This subject is admirably treated in Lessing's Laocoon, in which he traces the *bounds* of painting and poetry; a work which, it is much to be regretted, that able critic did not finish.

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Causes of the Peloponnesian War. — Rupture between Corinth and its Colony Corcyra. — Sea Fight. — Insolence and Cruelty of the Corcyreans. — They provoke the Resentment of the Peloponnesians — Obtain the Protection of Athens — Are defeated by the Corinthians — Who dread the resentment of Athens. — Their Scheme for rendering it impotent. — Description of the Macedonian Coast. — It revolts from Athens. — Siege of Potidæa. — General Confederacy against Athens. — Peloponnesian Embassy. — Its Demands firmly answered by Pericles. —His Speech to the Athenians. — The Thebans surprise Platæa. — Preparations for War on both Sides. — Invasion of Attica. — Operations of the Athenian Fleet. — Plague in Athens. — Calamitous Situation of that Republic. — Magnanimity of Pericles. — Firmness of his last Advice. — His Death and Character.

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Pericles summons to Athens deputies from all the Grecian republics.

By the lustre of elegant arts, the magnificence of Pericles had displayed and ennobled the military glory of his country; and the pre-eminence of Athens seemed immoveably established on the solid foundation of internal strength, adorned by external splendour. But this abundant measure of prosperity satisfied neither the active ambition of the republic, nor the enterprising genius of its minister. The Greeks beheld and admired,

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but had not yet formally acknowledged, the full extent of Athenian greatness. In order to extort this reluctant confession, than which nothing could more firmly secure to him the affectionate gratitude of his fellow-citizens, Pericles dispatched ambassadors to the republics and colonies in Europe and in Asia, requiring the presence of their deputies in Athens, to concert measures for rebuilding their ruined temples, and for performing the solemn vows and sacrifices promised, with devout thankfulness, to the immortal gods, who had wonderfully protected the Grecian arms, during their long and dangerous conflict with the Persian empire. This proposal, which tended to render Athens the common centre of deliberation and of union, was readily accepted in such foreign parts as had already submitted to the authority of that republic. But in neighbouring states, the ambassadors of Pericles were received coldly, and treated disrespectfully; in most assemblies of the Peloponnesus they were heard with secret disgust, and the pride of the Spartan senate openly derided the insolence of their demands. When, at their return home, they explained the behaviour of the Spartans, Pericles exclaimed, in his bold style of eloquence, that he "beheld war advancing with wide and rapid steps from the Peloponnesus." [1]

Introduction to the history of the Peloponnesian war.

Such was the preparation of materials which the smallest spark might throw into combustion. But before we relate the events which immedi-

[1] Plut. in Pericle.

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ately occasioned the memorable war of twenty-seven years, it is impossible (if the calamities of our own times have taught us to compassionate the miserable) not to drop a tear over the continual disasters which so long and so cruelly afflicted the most valuable and enlightened portion of mankind, and whose immortal genius was destined to enlighten the remotest ages of the world. When rude illiterate peasants are summoned to mutual hostility, and, unaffected by personal motives of interest or honour, expend their strength and blood to gratify the sordid ambition of their respective tyrants, we may lament the general stupidity and wretchedness of human nature; but we cannot heartily sympathise with men who have so little sensibility, nor very deeply and feelingly regret, that those should suffer pain, who seem both unwilling and unable to relish pleasure. Their heavy unmeaning aspect, their barbarous language, and more barbarous manners, together with their total indifference to the objects and pursuits which form the dignity and glory of man; these circumstances, interrupting the ordinary course of our sentiments, divert or repel the natural current of sympathy. Their victories or defeats are contemplated without emotion, coldly related, and carelessly read. But the war of Peloponnesus presents a different spectacle. The adverse parties took arms, not to support the unjust pretensions of a tyrant, whom they had reason to hate or to despise, but to vindicate their civil rights, and to maintain their political independence. The meanest

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Grecian soldier knew the duties of the citizen, the magistrate, and the general.[2] His life had been equally divided between the most agreeable amusements of leisure, and the most honourable employments of activity. Trained to those exercises and accomplishments which give strength and agility to the limbs, beauty to the shape, and grace to the motions, the dignity of his external appearance announced the liberal greatness of his mind; and his language, the most harmonious and expressive ever spoken by man, comprehended all that variety of conception, and all those shades of sentiment, that characterise the most exalted perfection of human manners.

Magnitude and importance of the subject.

Ennobled by such actors, the scene itself was highly important, involving not only the states of Greece, but the greatest of the neighbouring kingdoms; and, together with the extent of a foreign war, exhibited the intenseness of domestic sedition. As it exceeded the ordinary duration of human power or resentment, it was accompanied with unusual circumstances of terror, which, to the pious credulity of an unfortunate age, naturally announced the wrath of heaven, justly provoked by human cruelty. While pestilence and famine multiplied the actual sufferings, eclipses and earthquakes increased the con-

[2] Such is the testimony uniformly given of them in the panegyric of Athens by Isocrates, and confirmed by the more impartial authority of Xenophon, in the expedition of Cyrus. Their exploits in that wonderful enterprise justify the highest praise; and yet the national character had rather degenerated than improved, in the long interval between the periods alluded to.

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sternation and horror of that lamentable [3] period. Several warlike communities were expelled from their hereditary possessions; others were not only driven from Greece, but utterly extirpated from the earth; some fell a prey to party rage, others to the vengeance of foreign enemies; some were slowly exhausted by the contagion of a malignant atmosphere, others overwhelmed at once by sudden violence; while the combined weight of calamity assailed the power of Athens, and precipitated the downfall of that republic from the pride of flowing prosperity, to the lowest ebb of dejection and misery. [4]

Rupture between Corinth and its colony Corcyra. Olymp. lxxxv. 2. A. C. 439.

The general, but latent hostility of the Greeks, of which we have already explained the cause, was first called into action by a rupture between the ancient republic of Corinth, and its flourishing colony Corcyra. The haughty disdain of Corcyra, elated with the pride of wealth and naval greatness, had long denied and scorned

[3] Thucydid. l. i. p. 16. & seq.

[4] For the Peloponnesian war we have not, indeed, a full stream of history, but a regular series of annals in Thucydides and Xenophon; authors, of whom each might say,

Quæque ipse miserrima vidi,
Et quorum pars magna fui: ——

Many material circumstances may likewise be learned from the Greek orators, the writings of Plato and Aristotle, the comedies of Aristophanes, the twelfth and two following books of Diodorus Siculus, and Plutarch's Lives of Pericles, Nicias, Alcibiades, Lysander, and Agesilaus. It is remarkable, that the heavy compiler, as well as the lively biographer, have both followed the long lost works of Ephorus and Theopompus, in preference to those of Thucydides and Xenophon; a circumstance which strongly marks their want of judgment, but which renders their information more interesting to posterity.

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those marks of deference and respect which the uniform practice of Greece exacted from colonies towards their mother-country. At the Olympic and other solemn festivals, they yielded not the place of honour to the Corinthians; they appointed not a Corinthian high-priest to preside over their religion; and when they established new settlements on distant coasts, they requested not, as usual with the Greeks, the auspicious guidance of a Corinthian conductor.[5]

The Corinthians protect Epidamnus.

While the ancient metropolis, incensed by those instances of contempt, longed for an opportunity to revenge them, the citizens of Epidamnus, the most considerable sea-port on the coast of the Hadriatic, craved assistance at Corinth against the barbarous incursions of the Taulantii, an Illyrian tribe, who having united with a powerful band of Epidamnian exiles, greatly infested that territory, and threatened to storm the city. As Epidamnus was a colony of Corcyra, its distressed inhabitants had first sought protection there; but, although their petition was preferred with respectful deference, and urged with the most affecting demonstrations of abasement and calamity, by ambassadors who long remained under the melancholy garb of supplicants in the temple of Corcyrean Juno, the proud insensibility of these intractable islanders showed not the smallest inclination to relieve them; party restrained, it is probable, by the secret practices of the Epidamnian exiles, con-

[5] Schol. in Thucydid. ad locum. He mentions the other circumstances which I have melted into the text, and which will afterwards be confirmed by more classic authority.

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sisting of some of the principal and richest families of that maritime republic. The Corinthians readily embraced the cause of a people abandoned by *their* natural protectors, and *their* own inveterate enemies; and immediately supplied Epidamnus with a considerable body of troops, less with a view to defend its walls against the assaults of the Taulantii, than in order irrecoverably to detach and alienate its inhabitants from the interests of Corcyra.

Are defeated at sea by the Corcyreans. Olymp. lxxxvi. 2. A. C. 435.

The indignation of the Corcyreans was inflamed into fury, when they understood that those whom they had long affected to consider as aliens and as rivals, had interfered in the affairs of their colony. They instantly launched a fleet of forty sail, proceeded in hostile array to the harbour of Epidamnus, summoned the inhabitants to re-admit their exiles, and to expel the foreign troops. With such unconditional and arbitrary demands, the weakest and most pusillanimous garrison could scarcely be supposed to comply. The Epidamnians rejected them with scorn; in consequence of which their city was invested and attacked with vigour, by land and sea. The Corinthians were now doubly solicitous, both to defend the place, and to protect the troops already thrown into it, consisting partly of their Leucadian and Ambracian allies, but chiefly of Corinthian citizens. A proclamation, first published at Corinth, was industriously disseminated through Greece, inviting all who were unhappy at home, or who courted glory abroad, to undertake an expedition to Epidamnus, with assurance of enjoying the immunities and honours of a re-

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public whose safety they had ventured to defend. Many exiles and military adventurers, at all times profusely scattered over Greece, obeyed the welcome summons. Public assistance, likewise, was obtained, not only from Thebes and Megara, but from several states of the Peloponnesus. In this manner the Corinthians were speedily enabled to fit out an armament of seventy-five sail; which, directing its course towards Epidamnus, anchored in the Ambracian gulph, near the friendly harbour of Actium, where, in a future age, Augustus and Antony decided the empire of the Roman world. Near this celebrated scene of action, the impetuous Corcyreans hastened to meet the enemy. Forty ships were employed in the siege of Epidamnus. Twice that number sailed towards the Ambracian gulph. The hostile armaments fought with equal animosity; but the Corcyreans far surpassed in bravery and skill. Fifteen Corinthian vessels were destroyed; the rest escaped in disorder, and the decisive battle was soon followed by the surrender of Epidamnus. By a clemency little expected from the victors, the ancient inhabitants of the place were allowed their lives and liberties; but the Corinthians were made prisoners of war, and their allies condemned to death.

Epidamnus surrenders to the conquerors.

The Corcyreans thanked their gods, and erected a conspicuous trophy of victory on the promontory Leucimné, whose lofty ridges overlooked the distant scene of the engagement. During the two following years, they reigned undisturbed masters of the neighbouring seas; and though a

Their insolence and cruelty, A. C. 434, 433,

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principle of fear, or perhaps a faint remnant of respect towards their ancient metropolis, prevented them from invading the territory of Corinth, they determined to make the confederates of that republic feel the full weight of their vengeance. For this purpose, they ravaged the coast of Apollonia; plundered the city Ambracia; almost desolated the peninsula, now the island of Leucas; and emboldened by success, ventured to land in the Peloponnesus, and set fire to the harbour of Cyllené, because, in the late sea-fight, the Elians, to whom that place belonged, had supplied Corinth with a few gallies.[6]

which provoke the Peloponnesians.

The southern states of Greece, highly provoked by this outrage to the peaceable Elians, whose religious character had long commanded general respect, were still farther incensed through the active resentment of the Corinthians, who, exasperated at the disgrace of being vanquished by one of their own colonies, had, ever since their defeat, bent their whole attention, and employed the greatest part even of their private fortunes, to hire mercenaries, to gain allies, and especially to equip a new fleet, that they might be enabled to chastise the impious audacity (as they called it) of their rebellious children.[7]

The Corcyreans and Corinthians send ambassadors to Athens.

The magistrates of Corcyra saw and dreaded the tempest that threatened to burst on them, and which the unassisted strength of their island was totally unable to repel. They had not taken part in the late wars; they had not acceded to

[6] Thucydid. l. i. p. 22. & seq.

[7] Idem, ibid.

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the last treaty of peace; they could not summon the aid of a single confederate. In this difficulty they sent ambassadors to Athens, well knowing the secret animosity between that republic and the enemies by whom their own safety was endangered. The Corinthians likewise sent ambassadors to defeat their purpose. Both were allowed a hearing in the Athenian assembly; but first the Corcyreans, who, in a studied oration, acknowledged, "that having no previous claim of merit to urge, they expected not success in their negociation, unless an alliance between Athens and Corcyra should appear alike advantageous to those who proposed and to those who accepted it. Of this the Athenians would immediately become sensible, if they reflected that the people of Peloponnesus being equally hostile to both (the open enemies of Corcyra, the secret and more dangerous enemies of Athens), their country must derive a vast accession of strength by receiving, without trouble or expence, a rich and warlike island, which, unassisted and alone, had defeated a numerous confederacy; and whose naval force, augmenting the fleet of Athens, would for ever render that republic sovereign of the seas. If the Corinthians complained of the injustice of receiving their colony, let them remember, that colonies are preserved by moderation, and alienated by oppression; that men settle in foreign parts to better their situation, not to submit their liberties; to continue the equals, not to become the slaves of their less adventurous fellow-citizens. If they pretended that the demand of Corcyra was inconsistent

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Speech of the Corcyreans.

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with the last general treaty of peace, let the words of that treaty confound them, which expressly declare every Grecian city, not previously bound to follow the standard of Athens or of Sparta, at full liberty to accede to the alliance of either of those powers.[8] But it became the dignity of Athens to expect honour and safety, not from the punctilious observance of a slippery convention, but from the manly and prompt vigour of her councils. It suited the renowned wisdom of a republic, which had ever anticipated her enemies, to prevent the fleet of Corcyra from falling a prey to that confederacy, with whose inveterate envy she herself must be soon called to contend, and to merit the useful gratitude of an island possessing other valuable advantages, and most conveniently situate for intercepting the Sicilian and Italian supplies, which, in the approaching and inevitable war, would otherwise so powerfully assist their Doric ancestors of Peloponnesus."

Speech of the Corinthians.

The Corinthians indirectly answered this discourse by inveighing, with great bitterness, against the unexampled insolence and unnatural cruelty of Corcyra: "That infamous island had hitherto declined connection with every Grecian state, that she might carry on her piratical depredations unobserved, and alone enjoy the spoil of the unwary mariners who approached her inhospitable shores. Rendered at once wealthy and wicked through this inhuman practice, the

[8] Ειρηται γαρ εν αυταις, των Ελληνιδων πολεων ητις μηδαμου ξυμμαχει, εξειναι παρ' οποτεροις αν αρεσκηται ελθειν. The οποτεροις justifies the paraphrase in the text.

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Corcyreans had divested themselves of all piety and gratitude towards their mother-country, and embrued their parricidal hands in their parent's blood. Their audacity having provoked a late vengeance, which they were unable to elude or repel, they unseasonably sought protection from Athens, desiring those who were not accomplices of their injustice to participate their danger, and deluding them through the vain terror of contingencies into certain and immediate evil; for such must every war be regarded, its event being always doubtful, often fatal. The Corcyreans vainly chicaned as to *words*; Athens, it was clear, must violate the *sense* and *spirit* of the last treaty of peace, if she assisted the enemies of any contracting power. These fierce islanders acknowledged themselves a colony of Corinth, but pretended that settlements abroad owe nothing to those who established them, to those whose fostering care reared their infancy, from whose blood they sprung, by whose arms they had been defended. We affirm, on the contrary, (and appeal to you, Athenians! who have planted so many colonies,) that the mother-country is entitled to that authority which the Corcyreans have long spurned, to that respect which their insolence now refuses and disdains; that it belongs to us, their metropolis, to be their leaders in war, their magistrates in peace; nor can you, Athenians! oppose our just pretensions, and protect our rebellious colony, without setting an example most dangerous to yourselves."

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The Athenians enter into a treaty of defence with the Corcyreans.

These sensible observations made a deep impression on the moderate portion of the assembly; but the speech of the Corcyreans was more congenial to the ambitious views of the republic, and the daring spirit of Pericles. He wished, however, to avoid the dishonour of manifestly violating the peace, and therefore advised his countrymen to conclude with Corcyra, not a general or complete alliance, but only a treaty of defence, which, in case of invasion, obliged the two states reciprocally to assist each other.

Second sea-fight between the Corinthians and Corcyreans. Olymp. lxxxvii. 1. A. C. 432.

This agreement was no sooner ratified than ten Athenian ships reinforced the fleet of Corcyra, stationed on the *eastern* coast of the island; because the Corinthians, with their numerous allies, already rendezvoused on the opposite shore of Epirus. The hostile armaments met in line of battle, near the small islands Sibota, which seem anciently to have been separated from the continent by the impetuosity of the deep and narrow sea between Epirus and Corcyra. The bold islanders, with an hundred and ten sail, furiously attacked the superior fleet of the Corinthians, which was divided into three squadrons; the Megareans and Ambracians on the right, the Elians and other allies in the centre, their own ships on the left, which composed the principal strength of their line. The narrowness of the strait, and the immense numbers of ships, (far greater than had ever assembled in former battles between the Greeks,) soon rendered it impossible, on either side, to display any superiority in sailing, or any address in manœuvre. The

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action was irregular and tumultuous, and maintained with more firmness and vigour than naval skill. The numerous troops, both heavy and light armed, who were placed on the decks, advanced, engaged, grappled, and fought with obstinate valour; while the ships, continuing motionless and inactive, made the sea-fight resemble a pitched battle. At length, twenty Corcyrean gallies, having broke the left wing of the enemy, and pursued them to the coast of Epirus, injudiciously landed there to burn or plunder the Corinthian camp.

The Corcyreans defeated.

This unessential service too much weakened the smaller fleet, and rendered the inequality decisive. The Corcyreans were defeated with great slaughter, their incensed adversaries disregarding plunder and prisoners, and only thirsting for blood and revenge. In the blindness of their rage, they destroyed many of their fellow-citizens, who had been captured by the enemy in the beginning of the engagement. Nor was their loss of ships inconsiderable; thirty were sunk, and the rest so much shattered, that when they endeavoured to pursue the feeble remains of the Corcyrean fleet which had lost seventy gallies, they were effectually prevented from executing this design by the small Athenian squadron, which, according to its instructions from the republic, had taken no share in the battle, but, agreeably to the recent treaty between Athens and Corcyra, opposed the total destruction of their allies, first by hostile threats, at length by actual resistance.

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Arrival of an Athenian squadron.

The Corinthians having dragged up their wreck, and recovered the bodies of their slain, refitted on the coast of Epirus, and hastened to Corcyra; considerably off which they beheld the enemy reinforced, and drawn up in line of battle, in order to defend their coast. They advanced, however, with intrepidity, till, to their surprise and terror, they perceived an unknown fleet pressing towards them. This new appearance shook their resolution, and made them change their course. The Corcyreans, whose situation at first prevented them from seeing the advancing squadron, were astonished at the sudden retreat of the enemy; but when they discovered its cause, their uncertainty and fears, increased by their late afflicting calamity, made them prefer the safest measure. *They* also turned their prows; and, while the Corinthians retired to Epirus, pressed in an opposite direction to Corcyra. There, to their inexpressible joy, not unmixed with shame, they were joined by the unknown fleet, consisting of twenty Athenian gallies; a reinforcement which enabled them, next morning, to brave the late victorious armament off the coast of Sibota, a deserted harbour of Epirus, opposite to the small islands of the same name.

The Corinthians remonstrate against the proceedings of the Athenians.

The Corinthians, unwilling to contend with the unbroken vigour of their new opponents, dispatched a brigantine with the following remonstrance: "You act most unjustly, men of Athens! in breaking the peace, and commencing unprovoked hostilities. On what pretence do you hinder the Corinthians from taking ven-

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geance on an insolent foe? If you are determined to persist in wrong, seize us who address you, and treat us as enemies." The words were scarcely ended when the Corcyreans exclaimed, with a loud and unanimous voice, "Seize and kill them!" But the Athenians answered with moderation: "Men of Corinth, we neither break the peace, nor act unjustly. We come to defend our allies of Corcyra: sail unmolested by us to whatever friendly port you deem most convenient; but if you purpose making a descent on Corcyra, or on any of the dependencies of that island, we will exert our utmost power to frustrate your attempt."[9]

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Their answer.

This menace, which prevented immediate hostility, did not deter the Corinthians from surprising, as they sailed homeward, the town of Anactorium, on the Ambracian gulph, which, in the time of harmony between the colony and parent state, had been built at the joint expense of Corinth and Corcyra. From this sea-port, they carried off two hundred and fifty Corcyrean citizens, and eight hundred slaves. The former, added to the captives saved during the fury of the sea-fight, by the clemency or the avarice of a few Corinthian captains, made the whole prisoners of war amount to twelve hundred and fifty; a capture which, as we shall have occasion to relate, produced most important and lamentable consequences on the future fortune of Corcyra.

The Corinthians surprise Anactorium, and take many Corcyreans prisoners.

The Corinthians, having chastised the insolence of their revolted colony, had reason to

Their scheme for defeating

[9] Thucydid. p. 57.

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the vengeance of Athens. Olymp. lxxxvii. 1. A. C. 432.

dread the vengeance of its powerful ally. Impressed with this terror, they laboured with great activity and with unusual secrecy and address, to find for the Athenian arms an employment still more interesting than the Corcyrean war. The domestic strength of Athens defied assault; but a people who, on the basis of a diminutive territory and scanty population, had reared such an extensive fabric of empire, might easily be wounded in their foreign dependencies, which, for obvious causes, were ever prone to innovation and rebellion.

Description of the Macedonian coast.

The northern shores of the Ægæan sea, afterwards comprehended under the name of Macedon, and forming the most valuable portion of that kingdom, reluctantly acknowledged stern republican masters whom they obeyed and detested. This extensive coast, of which the subsequent history will demand our attention, composed, next to the Ægæan islands and colonies of Asia, the principal foreign dominions of the Athenian republic. The whole country (naturally divided by the Thermaic and Strymonic gulphs into the provinces of Pieria, Chalcis, and Pangæus) stretched in a direct line only an hundred and fifty miles; but the winding intricacies of the coast, indented by two great, and by two smaller bays, extended three times that length; and almost every convenient situation was occupied by a Grecian sea-port. But neither the extent of above four hundred miles, nor the extreme populousness of the maritime parts, formed the chief importance of this valuable possession. The middle division, called the

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region of Chalcis, because originally peopled by a city of that name in Eubœa, was equally fertile and delightful. The inland country, continually diversified by lakes, rivers, and arms of the sea, afforded an extreme facility of water carriage; Amphipolis, Acanthus, Potidæa, and many other towns, furnished considerable marts of commerce for the republics of Greece, as well as for the neighbouring kingdoms of Thrace and Macedon; and the constant demands of the merchant excited the patient industry of the husbandman. This beautiful district had, on one side, the black mountains of Pangæus, and on the other, the green vales of Pieria. The former, extending ninety miles towards the east and the river Nessus, abounded neither in corn nor pasture, but produced variety of timber the fittest for building ships; and the southern branches of the mountains contained rich veins of gold and silver, which were successively wrought by the Thasians and the Athenians, but of which the full value was first discovered by Philip of Macedon, who annually extracted from them the value of two hundred thousand pounds sterling.[10] The last and smallest division, Pieria, extended fifty miles along the Thermaic gulph, to the confines of Thessaly and Mount Pindus. The towns of Pydna and Methoné enriched the shore with the benefits of arts and commerce. Nature had been peculiarly kind to the inland country, whose shady hills, sequestered groves and fountains, lovely verdure, and tranquil soli-

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[10] Diodorus, l. xvi. p. 514.

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tude, rendered it, in the fanciful belief of antiquity, the favourite haunt of the Muses; who borrowed from this district their favourite appellation of *Pierides*. According to the same poetical creed, these goddesses might well *envy* the mortal inhabitants, who led a pastoral life, enjoyed happiness, and are scarcely mentioned in history.

That country revolts from Athens.

Such was the nature, and such the divisions of a territory, which the policy and resentment of Corinth encouraged to successful rebellion against the sovereignty of Athens. Several maritime communities of the Chalcidicé[11] took refuge within the walls of Olynthus, a town which they had built and fortified, at the distance of five miles from the sea, in a fertile and secure situation, between the rivers Olynthus and Amnius, which flow into the lake Bolyca, the inmost recess of the Toronaic gulph. The neighbouring city of Potidæa, a colony of Corinth, and governed by annual magistrates sent from the mother-country, yet like most establishments in the Chalcidicé, a tributary confederate[12] of Athens, likewise strengthened its walls, and prepared to revolt. But the Athenians anticipated this design by sending a fleet of thirty sail, which

[11] In using the name of Chalcidicé, I have followed the analogy of the Greek language rather than complied with custom; yet that part of the Macedonian coast, usually called the region of Chalcis, gave name to the province of Chalcidicé in Syria, as Strabo mentions in his sixteenth book; wherein he explains how the principal division of Syria came to be distinguished, after the conquests of Alexander, by Grecian appellations, borrowed from the geography described in the text.

[12] Συμμαχος ὑποτελης. Thucydid.

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having entered the harbour of Potidæa, commanded the citizens to demolish their fortifications, to give hostages as security for their good behaviour, and to dismiss the Corinthian magistrates. The Potidæans artfully requested, that the execution of these severe commands might be suspended until they had time to send ambassadors to Athens, and to remove the unjust suspicions of their fidelity.

The Athenians besiege Potidæa. Olymp. lxxxvii. 2. A. C. 432.

The weakness or avarice of Anchestratus, the Athenian admiral, listened to this deceitful request, and, leaving the coast of Potidæa, directed the operations of his squadrons against places of less importance, not sparing the dependencies of Macedon. Meanwhile the Potidæans sent a public but illusive embassy to Athens, while one more effectual was secretly dispatched to Corinth, and other cities of the Peloponnesus, from which they were supplied with two thousand men, commanded by the Corinthian Aristeus, a brave and enterprising general. These troops were thrown into the place during the absence of the Athenian fleet; and the Potidæans, thus reinforced, set their enemies at defiance. Incensed at this intelligence, the Athenians fitted out a new fleet of forty sail, with a large body of troops, under the command of Callias; who, arriving on the coast of Macedon, found the squadron of Anchestratus employed in the siege of Pydna. Callias judiciously exhorted him to desist from that enterprise, comparatively of little importance, that the united squadrons might attack Potidæa by sea, while an Athenian army of

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three thousand citizens, with a due proportion of allies, assaulted it by land. This measure was adopted, but the spirit of the garrison soon offered them battle almost on equal terms, though with unequal success. Callius, however, was slain, and succeeded by Phormio; who conducting a fresh supply of troops, desolated the hostile territory of Chalcis and Pieria; took several towns by storm; and, having ravaged the adjoining district, besieged the city of Potidæa.

The Corinthians endeavour to exasperate the Lacedæmonians against Athens.

While those transactions were carrying on in the north, the centre of Greece was shaken by the murmurs and complaints of the Corinthians and their Peloponnesian confederates, who lost all patience when their citizens were blocked up by an Athenian army. Accompanied by the deputies of several republics beyond the isthmus, who had recently experienced the arrogance of their imperious neighbour, they had recourse to Sparta, whose actual power and ancient renown justly merited the first rank in the confederacy, but whose measures[13] were rendered slow and cautious by the foresight and peaceful counsels of the wary Archidamus. When introduced into the Spartan assembly, the representatives of all the states inveighed, with equal bitterness, against the injustice and cruelty of Athens, while

[13] Plutarch (in Pericl.) ascribes the backwardness of the Spartans to engage in war to the advice of their principal magistrates, bribed by Pericles, who wished to gain time for his military preparations; a report as improbable as another calumny, that they were bribed by their allies to take arms against Athens (Aristoph. in Pace). The cause of their irresolution, assigned in the text, is confirmed by the subsequent behaviour of Archidamus.

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each described and exaggerated the weight of its peculiar grievances. The Megareans complained that, by a recent decree of that stern unfeeling republic, they had been excluded from the ports and markets of Attica [14]; an exclusion which, considering the narrowness and poverty of their own rocky district, was to deprive them of the first necessaries of life. The inhabitants of Ægina explained and lamented that, in defiance of recent and solemn treaties, and disregarding the liberal spirit of Grecian policy, the Athenians had reduced their unfortunate island into the most deplorable condition of servitude.

Speech of the Corinthians;

When other states had described their particular sufferings, the Corinthians last arose, and their speaker thus addressed the Lacedæmonian assembly: "Had we come hither, men of Lacedæmon! to urge our private wrongs, it might be sufficient barely to relate the transactions of the preceding, and present years. The revolt of Corcyra, the siege of Potidæa, are facts which

[14] The Megarcans were accused of ploughing some consecrated lands: they were accused of harbouring the Athenian slaves, fugitives, and exiles; other causes of complaint might easily have been discovered or invented by their powerful neighbours, who were provoked that such a small community on their frontier should uniformly spurn their authority. But the malignity of comic writers ascribed the severe decree against Megara to an event equally disgraceful to the morals of Athens, and injurious to the honour of Pericles. The following verses are translated from the Acharnensis of Aristophanes:

Juvenes profecti Megaram ebrij auferunt
Simætham ex scortatione nobilem;
Megarensis hinc populus, dolore perictus,
Furatur Aspasiæ duo scorta, haud impiger:
Hinc initium belli prorupit
Universis Græcis, ob tres meritriculas.

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speak for themselves: but the attention of this assembly should be directed to objects more important than particular injuries, however flagrant and enormous. The *general* oppressive system of Athenian policy; — it is this which demands your most serious concern; a system aiming at nothing less than the destruction of Grecian freedom, which is ready to perish through your supine neglect. That moderation and probity, men of Sparta! for which your domestic councils are justly famous, render you the dupes of foreign artifice, and expose you to become the victims of foreign ambition; which, instead of opposing with prompt alacrity, you have nourished by unseasonable delay; and, in consequence of this fatal error, are now called to contend, not with the infant weakness, but with the matured vigour of your enemies, those enemies, who, ever unsatisfied with their present measure of prosperity, are continually intent on some new project of aggrandisement. How different from *your* slow procrastination is the ardent character of the Athenians! Fond of novelty, and fertile in resources, alike active and vigilant, the accomplishment of one design leads them to another more daring. Desire, hope, enterprise, success, follow in rapid succession. Already have they subdued half of Greece; their ambition grasps the whole. Rouse, then, from your lethargy, defend your allies, invade Attica, maintain the glory of Peloponnesus, that sacred deposit, with which being entrusted by your ancestors, you are bound to transmit unimpaired to posterity."

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answered by the Athenians.

Several Athenians, then residing on private business at Sparta, desired to be heard in defence of their country. Equity could not deny the request of these voluntary advocates, who spoke in a style well becoming the loftiness of their republic.[15] With the pride of superiority, rather than the indignation of accused innocence, they affected to despise the false aspersions of their adversaries; and, instead of answering directly the many and loud clamours against their presumptuous abuse of power, described, with swelling encomiums, "the illustrious and memorable exploits of their countrymen; exploits which had justly raised them to a pre-eminence, acknowledged by their allies, uncontested by Sparta, and felt by Persia. When the dignity of Greece required of her to chastise the repeated insults of that ambitious empire, the Spartans had declined the conduct of a distant war; Athens had assumed the abandoned helm, and, after demolishing the cruel dominion of Barbarians, had acquired a just and lawful sway over the coasts of Europe and of Asia. The new subjects of the republic were long treated rather as fellow-citizens, than as tributaries and vassals. But it was the nature of man to revolt against the *supposed* injustice of his equals, rather than against the *real* tyranny of his masters. This circumstance, so honourable to Athenian lenity, had occasioned several unprovoked rebellions, which the republic had been compelled to punish with an exemplary severity. The apprehension

[15] Thucydid. l. xliii. & seq.

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of future commotions had lately obliged her to hold, with a firmer hand, the reins of government, and to maintain with armed power, an authority justly earned, and strictly founded in nature, of which it is an unalterable law, that the strong should govern the weak. If the Spartans, in violation of the right of treaties, thought proper to oppose this immoveable purpose, Athens well knew how to redress her wrongs, and would, doubtless, uphold her empire with the same valour and activity by which it had been established."

Pacific advice of King Archidamus;

Having heard both parties, the assembly adjourned, without forming any resolution. But next day, it appeared to be the prevailing opinion, that the arrogance and usurpation of Athens had already violated the peace, and that it became the prudence as well as the dignity of Sparta, no longer to defer hostilities. This popular current was vainly opposed by the experienced wisdom of King Archidamus, who still counselled peace and moderation, though his courage had been conspicuously distinguished in every season of danger. He exhorted his countrymen "not to rush blindly on war, without examining the resources of the enemy, and their own. The Athenians were powerful in ships, in money, in cavalry, and in arms; of all which the Lacedæmonians were destitute, or, at least, but sparingly provided. Whatever provocation, therefore, they had received, they ought in prudence to dissemble their resentment, until they could effectually exert their vengeance. The present crisis required negociation; if that failed, the silent preparation of a few years would enable them to take the field with well-founded

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hopes of redressing the grievances of their confederates." Had this moderate language made any impression on such an assembly, it would have been speedily obliterated by the blunt boldness of Sthenelaides, one of the Ephori, who closed the debate. "Men of Sparta! Of the long speeches of the Athenians I understand not the drift. While they dwell with studied eloquence on their own praises, they deny not to have injured our allies. If they behaved *well* in the Persian war, and now *otherwise*, their demerit is only the more apparent. Both then, and now, we are still the same; and, if we would maintain our character, we must not overlook their injustice. *They* have ships, money, and horses; but *we* have good allies, whose interests we must not abandon. Why do we deliberate, while our enemies are in arms? Let us take the field, with speed, and fight with all our might." The acclamations of the people followed, and war was resolved.

opposed by Sthenelaides, one of the Ephori.

This resolution was taken in the fourteenth year after the conclusion of the general peace; but near a twelvemonth elapsed before the properest measures for invading Attica could be finally adjusted among the discordant members of so numerous a confederacy. It consisted of all the seven republics of the Peloponnesus, except Argos and Achaia, the first of which from ambition, and the second perhaps from moderation [16], preserved, in the beginning of the war,

War determined. Olymp. lxxxvii. 2. A. C. 432.

General confederacy against Athens;

[16] The ambition of Argos is confirmed by the subsequent measures of that republic; the moderation of Achaia is suspected, from the na-

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a suspicious neutrality. Of the nine northern republics, Acarnania alone declined joining the allies, its coast being particularly exposed to the ravages of the Corcyrean fleets. The cities of Naupactus and Platæa, for reasons that will soon appear, were totally devoted to their Athenian protectors; whose cause was likewise embraced by several petty princes of Thessaly. But all the other states beyond the isthmus longed to follow the standard of Sparta, and to humble the aspiring ambition of their too powerful neighbour.

sends a menacing embassy to that republic;

The representatives of these various communities having, according to the received practice of Greece, assembled in the principal city of the confederacy, were stimulated to action by the Corinthians, who, as their colony of Potidæa was still closely besieged, laboured to accelerate reprisals on Attica, by exhibiting the most advantageous prospect of the approaching war. They observed, "That the army of the confederacy, exceeding sixty thousand men, far out-numbered the enemy, whom they excelled still more in merit, than they surpassed in number. The one was composed of national troops, fighting for the independence of those countries in whose government they had a share; the other chiefly consisted in vile mercenaries, whose pay was their government and their country. If supplies of money were requisite, the allied states would doubtless be more liberal and forward to defend their interest and honour, than the reluctant

ture of the Achæan laws, which have been already mentioned, and are particularly explained in my History of the World, vol. ii. c. 13.

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tributaries of Athens to rivet their servitude and chains; and, if still more money should be wanted, the Delphic and Olympic treasures afforded an inexhaustible resource, which could not be better expended than in defending the sacred cause of justice and of Grecian freedom." In order to gain full time, however, for settling all matters among themselves, the confederates dispatched to Athens various overtures of accommodation, which they well knew would be indignantly rejected. In each embassy they rose in their demands, successively requiring the Athenians to raise the siege of Potidæa; to repeal their prohibitory decree against Megara; to withdraw their garrison from Ægina; in fine, to declare the independence of their colonies. [17]

which alarms the Athenians.

These last demands were heard at Athens with a mixture of rage and terror. The capricious multitude, who had hitherto approved and admired the aspiring views of Pericles, now trembled on the brink of the precipice to which he had conducted them. They had hitherto

[17] Besides complying with the demands mentioned in the text, the Athenians were required "to expel the descendants of those impious men who had profaned the temple of Minerva." This alluded to an event which happened the first year of the 45th Olympiad, or 598 years before Christ. Cylon, a powerful Athenian, having seized the citadel, and aspiring at royalty, was defeated in his purpose by Megacles, a maternal ancestor of Pericles, who, having decoyed the associates of Cylon from the temple of Minerva, butchered them without mercy, and with too little respect for the privileges of that venerable sanctuary. The whole transaction is particularly related by Plutarch in his life of Solon. The renewal of such an antiquated complaint, at this juncture, pointed particularly at Pericles, and showed the opinion which the Spartans entertained of his unrivalled influence and authority.

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pushed the siege of Potidæa with great vigour, but without any near prospect of success. They must now contend with a numerous confederacy, expose their boasted grandeur to the doubtful chance of war, and exchange the amusements and pleasures of the city for the toils and hardships of a camp. Of these discontented murmurs, the rivals and enemies of Pericles greedily availed themselves to traduce the character and administration of that illustrious statesman. It was insinuated, that, sacrificing to private passion the interest of his country, he had procured the imperious decree, of which the allies so justly complained, to resent the personal injury of his beloved Aspasia, whose family had been insulted by some licentious youths of [18] Megara. Diopeithes, Dracontides, and other demagogues, derided the folly of taking arms on such a frivolous pretence; and, as preparatory to the impeachment of Pericles himself, the courts of justice were fatigued with prosecutions of his valuable friends.

Clamour excited against Pericles.

Persecution of his friends

The philosopher Anaxagoras, and Phidias the statuary, reflected more lustre than they could derive from the protection of any patron. The character of Aspasia was of a mixed and doubtful kind. To the natural and sprightly graces of Ionia, her native country, she added extraordinary accomplishments of mind and body; and having acquired in high perfection the talents and excellencies of the other sex, was accused of being too indifferent to the honour of her own. Scarcely superior in modesty to Phryné, Thais, or Erigoné [19], her wit, her learning, and her elo-

[18] See above, p. 201. [19] See above, p. 115.

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quence excited universal admiration or envy[20], while the beauty of her fancy and of her person inspired more tender sentiments into the susceptible breast of Pericles. She was reproached, not with entertaining free votaries of pleasure in her family (which in that age was regarded as a very allowable commerce), but of seducing the virtue of Athenian matrons; a crime severely punished by the laws of every Grecian republic. But we have reason to infer innocence in this particular, since she was saved by Pericles from the fury of an enraged populace, at a crisis when his most strenuous exertions could not prevent the banishment of Anaxagoras and Phidias.

Banishment of Anaxagoras and Phidias.

The former was accused of propagating doctrines inconsistent with the established religion; the latter, of having indulged the very pardonable vanity (as it should seem) of representing himself and his patron on the shield of his admired statue of Minerva. There, with inimitable art, Phidias had engraved the renowned victory of the Athenians over the warlike daughters of the Thermodon[21]; he had depicted himself under the figure of a bald old man raising a heavy stone (an allusion to his skill in architecture), while the features of Pericles were distinguished in the countenance of an Athenian chief, bravely combating the Queen of the Amazons, though his elevated arm hid part of the face, and in some measure concealed the resemblance.[22] For this fictitious crime, Phidias was driven from a city

[20] Plato in Menex. [21] Lysias Orat. Funeb.
[22] Plut. in Pericl. & Aristot. de Mund.

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which had been adorned by the unwearied labours of his long life, and debarred beholding those wonders of art which his sublime genius had created.

Accusation of Pericles.

The accusation of the principal friends of Pericles paved the way for his own. He was reproached with embezzling the public treasure; but, on this occasion, plain facts confounded the artifices of his enemies. It was proved, that his private expences were justly proportioned to the measure of his patrimony; many instances were brought of his generous contempt of wealth in the service of his country; and it appeared, after the strictest examination, that his fortune had not increased since he was intrusted with the exchequer. This honourable display of unshaken probity, which had ever formed the basis of the authority [23] of Pericles, again reconciled to him the unsteady affections of his countrymen, and gave resistless force to that famous and fatal speech, which unalterably determined the war of Peloponnesus.

[23] This testimony, which is given by the impartiality of Thucydides, destroys at once the numerous aspersions of the comic poets of the times which have been copied by Plutarch, and from him transcribed by modern compilers. Pericles, it is said, raised the war of Peloponnesus, merely for his own convenience and safety; and was encouraged to this measure by the advice of his kinsman Alcibiades, then a boy; who, calling one day at his house, was refused admittance, "because Pericles was occupied in considering how he might best state his accounts." Let him rather consider," said the sagacious stripling, "how to give no account at all." Pericles took the hint, and involved his country in a war, which allowed no time for examining the public expenditure. Such anecdotes may amuse those who can believe them.

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"Often have I declared, Athenians! that we must not obey the unjust commands of our enemies. I am still firmly of that mind, convinced as I am of the dangerous vicissitudes of war and fortune; and that human hopes, designs, and pursuits, are all fleeting and fallacious. Yet, in the present crisis, necessity and glory should alike fix us to this immovable resolution. The decree against Megara, which the first embassy required us to repeal, is not the cause of that hostile jealousy which has long secretly envied our greatness, and which has now more openly conspired our destruction. Yet that decree, of which some men have spoken so lightly, involved the honour of our councils and the stability of our empire. By pusillanimously repealing it, we should have emboldened our enemies, who, notwithstanding our proper firmness in the first instance, have yet successively risen to higher and more arbitrary demands; demands which merit to be answered, not by embassies, but by arms.

He justifies his measures and maintains the necessity of the war;

"The flourishing resources, and actual strength, of the republic, affords us the most flattering prospect of military success. Impregnably fortified by land, our shores are defended by three hundred galleys; besides a body of cavalry, to the number of twelve hundred, together with two thousand archers, we can immediately take the field with thirteen thousand pikemen, without draining our foreign garrisons, or diminishing the complete number of sixteen thousand men who defend the walls and fortresses in Attica. The wealthy seaports of Thrace and

explains the strength and resources of the republic;

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Macedon; the flourishing colonies of Ionia, Eolia, and Doria; in a word, the whole extensive coast of the Asiatic peninsula, acknowledge, by annual contributions, the sovereignty of our guardian navy, whose strength is increased by the ships of Chios, Lesbos, and Corcyra, while the smaller islands furnish us, according to their ability, with money and troops. Athens thus reigns queen of a thousand[24] tributary republics, and notwithstanding the expences incurred by the siege of Potidæa, and the architectural ornaments of the city, she possesses six thousand talents in her treasury.

which he contrasts with the weakness of the enemy;

"The situation of our enemies is totally the reverse. Animated by rage, and emboldened by numbers, they may be roused to a transient, desultory assault; but, destitute of resources, and divided in interests, they are totally incapable of any steady, persevering exertion. With sixty thousand men they may enter Attica; and, if our unseasonable courage gives them an opportunity, may win a battle; but unless our rash imprudence assists and enables them, they cannot possibly prosecute a successful war. Indeed, Athenians! I dread less the power of the enemy, than your own ungovernable spirit. Instead of being seduced from your security, by a vain desire to defend, against superior numbers, your plantations and villas in the open country, you ought to destroy those superfluous possessions

[24] Aristoph. Vesp. He says, that twenty thousand Athenians might live as in the Elysian fields, if each tributary city undertook to provide for twenty citizens. V. 705, &c.

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with your own hands. To you, who receive the conveniences of life from so many distant dependencies, the devastation of Attica is a matter of small moment; but how can your enemies repair, how can they survive, the devastation of the Peloponnesus? How can they prevent, or remedy, this fatal, this intolerable calamity, while the squadrons of Athens command the surrounding seas? If these considerations be allowed their full weight; if reason, not passion, conducts the war; it seems scarcely in the power of fortune to rob you of victory. Yet let us answer the Peloponnesians with moderation, "that we will not forbid the Megareans our ports and markets, if the Spartans, and other states of Greece, abolish their exclusive and inhospitable laws: that we will restore independent governments to such cities as were free at the last treaty of peace, provided the Spartans engage to imitate this example: that we are ready to submit all differences to the impartial decision of any equitable tribunal; and that, although these condescending overtures be rejected, we will not commence hostilities, but are prepared to repel them with our usual vigour."[25] The assembly murmured applause; a decree was proposed and ratified; the ambas-

dictates a reply to the Peloponnesians,

which is taken for declaration of war.

[25] In examining the speech ascribed to Pericles, on this occasion by Thucydides, the attentive reader will perceive that it supposes the knowledge of several events omitted in the preceding narrative of that historian, but which I have related in the text. The English speech is shorter than the Greek, but contains more information, collected from Plutarch, Diodorus, Aristophanes, and the 2d book of Thucydides himself.

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sadors returned home with the reply dictated by Pericles; which, moderate as it seemed to the Athenian statesman, sounded like an immediate declaration of war to the Spartans and their allies.

The Thebans surprise Platæa. Olymp. lxxxvii. 2. A. C. 431. May 7th.

Six months after the battle of Potidæa, the Thebans, who were the most powerful and the most daring of these allies, undertook a military enterprise against the small but magnanimous republic of Platæa. Though situate in the heart of Bœotia, amidst numerous and warlike enemies, the Platæans still preserved an unshaken fidelity to Athens, whose toils and triumphs they had shared in the Persian war. Yet even this feeble community, surrounded on every side by hostile Bœotians, was not exempted from domestic discord. Nauclides, the perfidious and bloody leader of an aristocratical faction, engaged to betray the Platæan gates to a body of foreign troops, provided they enabled him to overturn the democracy, and to take vengeance on his political adversaries, whom he regarded as his personal foes. Eurymachus, a noble and wealthy Theban, with whom, in the name of his associates, this sanguinary agreement had been contracted, entered Platæa with three hundred of his countrymen, at the first watch of the night; but, regardless of their promise to Nauclides, who expected that they would break tumultuously into the houses, and butcher his enemies, the Thebans formed regularly in arms, and remained quietly in the market-place, having issued a proclamation to invite all the citizens indiscriminately to become allies to

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Thebes. The Platæans readily accepted a proposal which delivered them from the terror of immediate death. But while they successively ratified the agreement, they observed, with mixed shame and joy, that darkness and surprise had greatly augmented the number of the invaders. Encouraged by this discovery, they secretly dispatched a messenger to Athens; and, while they expected the assistance of their distant protector, determined to leave nothing untried for their own deliverance. CHAP. XV.

Daring enterprise of the Platæans.

The night was spent in an operation not less daring than extraordinary. As they could not assemble in the streets without alarming suspicion, they dug through the interior walls of their houses, and fortified the outward in the best manner the time would allow, with their ploughs, carts, and other instruments of husbandry. Before day-break, the work was complete; when, with one consent, they rushed furiously against the enemy, the women and children animating with horrid shrieks and gestures the efforts of their rage. It was night, and a storm of rain and thunder augmented the gloomy terrors of the battle. The Thebans were unacquainted with the ground; above an hundred fell; near two hundred fled in trepidation to a lofty and spacious tower adjoining the walls, which they mistook for one of the gates of the city. In the first movements of resentment, the Platæans prepared to burn them alive; but a moment's reflection deterred them from this dangerous cruelty. Meanwhile a consi-

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derable body of Thebans advanced towards Platæa, to co-operate with their countrymen. Their progress would have been hastened by a fugitive who met them, and related the miscarriage of the enterprise, had not the heavy rain so much swelled the Asopus, that an unusual time was spent in crossing that river. They had scarcely entered the Platæan territory, when a second messenger informed them, that their unfortunate companions were all killed or taken prisoners. Upon this intelligence they paused to consider, whether, instead of proceeding to the Platæan walls, where they could not perform any immediate service, they ought not, as an easier enterprise, to seize the citizens of that place, who were dispersed over their villages in the open country.

Their stratagem for destroying the Thebans without danger to themselves.

But while they deliberated on this measure, a Platæan herald arrived, complaining of the unjust and most unexpected infraction of the peace, by a daring and atrocious conspiracy; commanding the Thebans immediately to leave the territory of Platæa, if they hoped to deliver their fellow-citizens from captivity; and denouncing, if they refused compliance, that their countrymen would inevitably be punished with a cruel death. This stratagem, no less audacious than artful, prevailed on the enemy to repass the Asopus, while the Platæans lost not a moment to assemble within their walls the scattered inhabitants of their fields and villas; and braving the Theban resentment, the immediate effects of which they had rendered impotent, massacred the unhappy prisoners to the number of an hun-

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dred and eighty, among whom was Eurymachus, the chief promoter of the expedition. After this signal act of vengeance, they strengthened the works of the place; transported their wives and children to the tributary islands of Athens; and, that they might more securely sustain the expected siege, required and received from that republic a plentiful supply of provisions, and a considerable reinforcement of troops.

Preparations for war on both sides. A. C. 431.

The sword was now drawn, and both parties seemed eager to exert their utmost strength. The Spartans summoned their confederates to the Isthmus; demanded money and ships from their Italian and Sicilian colonies; and solicited assistance from the Persian monarch Artaxerxes, and from Perdiccas King of Macedon; both of whom naturally regarded the Athenians as dangerous neighbours, and ambitious invaders of their coasts. The people of Athens also condescended to crave the aid of Barbarians, and actually contracted an alliance with Sitalces, the warlike chief of the Odrysians, who formed the most powerful tribe in Upper Thrace. They required at the same time an immediate supply of cavalry from their Thessalian allies, while their fleet already cruised on the coast of Peloponnesus, to confirm the fidelity of the surrounding islands; an object deemed essential to the successful invasion of that territory. The unexperienced youth, extremely numerous in most republics of Greece, rejoiced at the prospect of war. The aged saw and dreaded the general commotion, darkly foretold, as they thought, by

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ancient oracles and prophecies, but clearly and recently announced, by an earthquake in the sacred, and hitherto immovable island of Delos. Such was the ardour of preparation, that only a few weeks after the surprise of Platæa, the Lacedæmonian confederates, to the number of sixty thousand, assembled from the north and south, at the Corinthian Isthmus. The several communities were respectively commanded by leaders of their own appointment; but the general conduct of the war was intrusted to Archidamus, the Spartan King.

Archidamus addresses the confederates.

In a council of the chiefs, that prince warmly approved their alacrity in taking the field, and extolled the greatness and bravery of an army, the most numerous and best provided that had ever followed the standard of any Grecian general. Yet their preparations, he said, however extraordinary, were not greater than their enterprise required. They waged war with a people not less powerful, than active and daring; who had discernment to perceive, and ability to improve, every opportunity of advantage; and whose resentment would be as much inflamed, as their pride would be wounded, by the approach of invading enemies. It seemed probable, that the Athenians would not allow their lands to be wasted, without attempting to defend them. The confederates, therefore, must be always on their guard; their discipline must be strict, regular, and uniform; to elude the skill, and to oppose the strength of Athens, demanded their utmost vigilance and activity.

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Archidamus, after leading his army into Attica seems blameable for allowing their martial ardour to evaporate in the fruitless siege of Oenoé, the strongest Athenian town towards the southern frontier of Bœotia. This tedious and unsuccessful operation enabled the Athenians to complete, without interruption, the singular plan of defence so ably traced by the bold genius of Pericles. They hastened the desolation of their own fields; demolished their delightful gardens and villas, which it had been their pride to adorn; and transported, either to Athens or the isles, their valuable effects, their cattle, furniture, and even the frames of their houses. The numerous inhabitants of the country, towns, and villages, where the more opulent Athenians commonly spent the greater part of their time, flocked to the capital, which was well furnished with the means of subsistence, though not of accommodation, for such a promiscuous crowd of strangers, with their families, slaves, or servants. Many people of lower rank, destitute of private dwellings, were obliged to occupy the public halls, the groves and temples, the walls and battlements. Even persons of distinction were narrowly and meanly lodged; an inconvenience severely felt by men accustomed to live at large in the country, in rural ease and elegance. But resentment against the public enemy blunted the sense of personal hardship, and silenced every murmur of private complaint.

Leads them to Attica.

Meanwhile the confederate army, having raised the siege of Oenoé, advanced along the eastern frontier of Attica; and within eighty days after

The confederates ravage Attica.

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Olymp. lxxxvii. 2. A. C. 431.

the surprise of Platæa, invaded the Thriasian plain, the richest ornament of the Athenian territory. Having wasted that valuable district with fire and sword, they proceeded to Eleusis, and from thence to Acharnæ, the largest borough in the commonwealth, and only eight miles distant from the capital. There they continued an unusual length of time, gradually demolishing the houses and plantations, and daily exercising every act of rapacious cruelty, with a view either to draw the enemy to a battle, or to discover whether they were unalterably determined to keep within their walls; a resolution which, if clearly ascertained, would enable the invaders to proceed with more boldness and effect, and to carry on their ravages with security, even to the gates of Athens.

The Athenians retort their injuries.

The Athenians, hitherto intent on their naval preparations, had exerted an uncommon degree of patience and self-command. But their unruly passions could no longer be restrained, when they learned the proceedings in Acharnæ. The proprietors of that rich and extensive district boasted that they alone could send three thousand brave spearmen into the field, and lamented, that they should remain cooped up in dishonourable confinement, while their possessions fell a prey to an hostile invader. Their animated complaints inflamed the kindred ardour of the Athenian youth. It appeared unworthy of those who had so often ravaged with impunity the territories of their neighbours, patiently to behold the desolation of their own. Interested priests announced approaching calamity; seditious ora-

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tors clamoured against the timid councils of Pericles; the impetuous youth required their general to lead them to battle. Amidst this popular commotion, the accomplished general and statesman remained unmoved, bravely resisting the storm, or dexterously eluding its force. Though determined not to risk an engagement with the confederates, he seasonably employed the Athenian and Thessalian cavalry to beat up their quarters, to intercept their convoys, to harass, surprise, or cut off their advanced parties. While these enterprises tended to divert or appease the tumult, a fleet of an hundred and fifty sail ravaged the defenceless coast of Peloponnesus. A squadron, less numerous, made a descent on Locris. The rebellious inhabitants of Ægina were driven from their possessions, and an Athenian colony was settled in that island. The wretched fugitives, whose country had long rivalled Athens itself in wealth, commerce, and naval power, received the maritime district of Thyrea[26] from the bounty of their Spartan protectors.

The confederates evacuate Attica.

Intelligence of these proceedings, and still more the scarcity of provisions, engaged the confederates to return to their respective republics. Having advanced by the eastern, they retired along the western frontier of Attica; every place in their line of march experiencing the fatal effects of their resentment or rapacity.

[26] This district lay on the frontier of the Argive and Lacedæmonian territory, and had long formed an object of contention between those republics. See vol. i. pp. 322, 323.

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Soon after their retreat, Pericles, towards the beginning of autumn, led out the Athenians to ravage the neighbouring and hostile territory of Megara. The invading army was accidentally observed by the fleet, while it returned from the coast of Peloponnesus. The sailors hastened to share the danger and plunder. The whole Athenian force thus amounted to nearly twenty thousand men; a number far more than sufficient to deprive the industrious Megareans of the hopes of a scanty harvest, earned with infinite toil and care, in their narrow mountainous district.

Pericles invades Megara.

The winter was not distinguished by any important expedition on either side. The Corinthians, long inured to the sea in all seasons, carried on indecisive hostilities against the Athenian allies in Acarnania. During this inactive portion of the year, the Athenians, as well as their enemies, were employed in celebrating the memory of the slain, with much funeral pomp, and high encomiums on their valour[27]; in distributing the

[27] This mournful solemnity, as practised by the Athenians, is described by Thucydides, l. ii. p. 120, & seq. The bones of the deceased were brought to a tabernacle previously erected for receiving them. On the day appointed for the funeral, they were conveyed from thence in cypress coffins, drawn on carriages, one for each tribe, to the public sepulchre in the Ceramicus, the most beautiful suburb of the city. The relations of the dead decked out the remains of their friends as they judged most proper (See Lysias against Agoratus). One empty bier was drawn along in honour of those whose bodies had not been recovered. Persons of every age, and of either sex, citizens and strangers, attended this solemnity. When the bones were deposited in the earth, some citizen of dignity and merit, named by the state, mounted a lofty pulpit, and pronounced the panegyric of the deceased, of their ancestors, and the Athenian

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prizes of merit among the surviving warriors; in confirming their respective alliances; and in fortifying such places on their frontier as seemed most exposed to military excursions, or naval descents.

The plague breaks out in Athens. A. C. 350.

The return of summer brought back into Attica the Peloponnesian invaders; but it likewise introduced a far more dreadful calamity. A destructive pestilence, engendered in Ethiopia, infected Egypt, and spread over great part of the dominions of the king of Persia. History does not explain by what means this fatal disorder was communicated to Greece. The year had been in other respects remarkably healthful. As the disease first appeared in the Piræus, the principal Athenian harbour, we may be allowed to conjecture, that it was imported from the east, either by the Athenian merchantmen, or by the ships of war, which annually sailed to that quarter, in order to levy money on the tributary cities. When its miserable symptoms broke out in the Piræus, the inhabitants suspected that the enemy had poisoned their wells. But it soon extended over the adjoining districts, and raged

republic. On this occasion, Pericles himself had been appointed to that solemn office. He performed it with great dignity. His speech, containing almost as many ideas as words, is incapable of abridgment; nor does its nature admit the insertion of it intire in the present history, in which eloquence is considered merely as an engine of government, and such speeches only introduced as influenced public resolutions and measures. It is, however, worthy of observation, that his magnificent display of the advantages, the security, and the glory of Athens, forms a striking contrast with the unexpected calamities which soon overwhelmed his unhappy country.

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with peculiar violence in the populous streets which surrounded the citadel.

Description of that malady.

The malady appeared under various forms, in different constitutions; but its specific symptoms were invariably the same. It began with a burning heat in the head; the eyes were red and inflamed; the tongue and mouth had the colour of blood. The pain and inflammation descended to the breast with inexpressible anguish; the skin was covered with ulcers; the body of a livid red; the external heat not sensible to the touch, but the internal so violent, that the slightest covering could not be endured. An insatiable thirst was an universal symptom; and, when indulged, increased the disorder. When the bowels were attacked, the patient soon perished through debility. Some lived seven or nine days, and died of a fever, with apparent remains of strength. The life was saved when the internal vigour diverted the course of the disease towards the extremities. Those who once recovered were never dangerously attacked a second time, from which they conceived a vain hope of proving thenceforth superior to every bodily infirmity. The disorder, which was always accompanied with an extreme dejection of spirits, often impaired the judgment as well as the memory. All remedies, human and divine, were employed in vain to stop the progress of this fatal contagion. The miserable crowds expired in the temples, preferring unavailing prayers to the gods. A shocking spectacle was seen round the sacred fountains, where multitudes lay dead, or perished in agonising torture.

Its effects on the mind.

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on morals.

At length all medical assistance was despised[28], and all religious ceremonies neglected. Continually suffering or apprehending the most dreadful calamities, the Athenians became equally regardless of laws human and divine. The fleeting moment only was theirs. About the future they felt no concern, nor did they believe it of concern to the gods, since all, good or bad, alike perished. Decency no longer imposing respect, the only pursuit was that of present pleasure. To beings of an hour, the dread of punishment formed no restraint; to victims of misery, conscience presented no terrors. Athens thus exhibited at once whatever is most afflicting in wretchedness, and most miserable in vice, uniting to the rage of disease the more destructive fury of unbridled passions.

Devastation of Attica. Olymp. lxxxvii. 3. A. C. 430.

While the city fell a prey to these accumulated evils, the country was laid waste by an implacable enemy. On the present occasion, the confederates advanced beyond Athens; they destroyed the works of the miners on mount Laurium; and, having ravaged all that southern

[28] The supposed decree of the Athenians in favour of Hippocrates, says, that his scholars showed the means both of preventing and curing the plague. Τους χρη θεραπευειν ασφαλως διαφευξασθαι τον λοιμον; and again, Οπως τε ιατρικη δοθεισα ασφαλως σωζει τους καμνοντας, Hippocrates, p. 1290. This decree, therefore, as well as the letters of Hippocrates, mentioning the plague at Athens, are unquestionably spurious. The malady is minutely described by Thucydides, l. ii. c. xlvii.; by Lucretius, l. vi. ver. 1136. & seq. Diodorus, l. xii. differs widely from them both, probably having copied from Ephorus and Theopompus. Hippocrates has several cases of the plague from Thasos, Abdera, &c. but not one from Athens. See Hippocrat. de Morbis Epidem.

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district, as well as the coast opposite to Eubœa and Naxos, they traced a line of devastation along the Marathonian shore, the glorious scene of an immortal victory, obtained by the valour of Athens, in defence of those very states by which her own territories were now so cruelly desolated.

Magnanimity of Pericles.

If conscious wisdom and rectitude were not superior to every assault of fortune, the manly soul of Pericles must have sunk under the weight of such multiplied calamities. But his fortitude still supported him amidst the flood of public and domestic woe. With decent and magnanimous composure, he beheld the unhappy fate of his numerous and flourishing family, successively snatched away by the rapacious pestilence. At the funeral of the last of his sons, he dropped, indeed, a few reluctant tears of paternal tenderness; but ashamed of this momentary weakness, he bent his undejected mind to the defence of the republic. Having collected an hundred Athenian, together with fifty Chian or Lesbian vessels, he sailed through the Saronic gulph, and ravaged the unprotected coasts of Elis, Argos, and Laconia. While this armament weighed anchor in the Piræus, there happened an eclipse of the sun[29], which terrified the superstitious mariners, whose minds were already clouded by calamity. The pilot of the admiral galley betrayed the most unmanly cowardice, when

[29] Plutarch. in Pericl. But as Thucydides mentions no such eclipse that summer, although extremely attentive in recording such phænomena, we may suspect the chronology of Plutarch.

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Pericles, throwing a cloak before his eyes, asked, "whether the obscurity surprised him?" the pilot answering him in the negative, "Neither," rejoined Pericles, "ought an eclipse of the sun, occasioned by the intervention of a revolving planet, which intercepts its light." CHAP. XV.

His unfortunate expedition to the Peloponnesus, Olymp. lxxxvii. 3. A. C. 430.

Having arrived on the Argolic coast, the Athenians laid siege to the sacred city Epidaurus, whose inhabitants gloried in the peculiar favour of Æsculapius. The plague again breaking out in the fleet, was naturally ascribed to the vengeance of that offended divinity. They raised the siege of Epidaurus; nor were their operations more successful against Trœzené, Hermioné, and other Peloponnesian cities. They took only the small fortress of Prasiæ, a sea-port of Laconia; after which they returned to the Piræus, afflicted with the pestilence, and without having performed any thing suitable to the greatness of the armament, or the public expectation.

Athenians more unfortunate in Thrace.

The Athenian expedition into Thrace was still more unfortunate. Into that country Agnon conducted a body of four thousand men, to cooperate with Phormio in the siege of Potidæa. But in the space of forty days, he lost one thousand and fifty soldiers in the plague; and the only consequence of his expedition was, to infect the northern army with that melancholy disorder.

Pericles traduced.

These multiplied disasters reduced the Athenians to despair. Their sufferings exceeded example and belief, while they were deprived of the only expected consolation, the pleasure of revenge. The bulk of the people desired peace on

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any terms. Ambassadors were sent to Sparta, but not admitted to an audience. The orators clamoured and traduced Pericles. The undiscerning populace ascribed their misfortunes to the unhappy effect of his councils: but his magnanimity did not yet forsake him; and, for the last time, he addressed the assembly: "Your anger, Athenians! occasions no surprise, because it comes not unexpected. Your complaints excite no resentment, because to complain is the right of the miserable. Yet, as you mistake both the cause and the measure of your present calamity, I will venture to expose such dangerous, and, if not speedily corrected, such fatal errors. The justice and necessity of the war I have often had occasion to explain: it is just, that you, who have protected and saved, should govern Greece; it is necessary, if you would assert your pre-eminence, that you should now resist the Peloponnesians. On maintaining this resolution, not your honour only, but your safety, depends. The sovereignty of Greece cannot, like an empty pageant of grandeur, be taken up with indifference, or without danger laid down. That well-earned dominion, which you have sometimes exercised tyrannically, must be upheld and defended, otherwise you must submit, without resource, to the resentment of your injured allies, and the animosity of your inveterate enemies. The hardships, to which you were exposed from the latter, I foresaw and foretold; the pestilence, that sudden and improbable calamity, it was impossible for human prudence to conjec-

The magnanimous firmness of his last advice to the Athenians.

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ture; yet great and unexpected as our misfortunes have been, and continue, they are still accidental and transitory, while the advantages of this necessary war are permanent, and its glory will be immortal. The greatness of that empire which we strive to uphold, extends beyond the territories of our most distant allies. Of the two elements, destined for the use of men, the sea and the land, we absolutely command the one, nor is there any kingdom or republic, or confederacy, in a condition to dispute our dominion. Let this consideration elevate our hopes; and personal afflictions will be drowned in the tide of public prosperity. Let us bear, with resignation, the strokes of Providence; and we shall repel, with vigour, the assaults of our enemies. It is the hereditary and glorious distinction of our republic, never to yield to adversity. We have defied danger, expended treasure and blood; and, amidst obstinate and formidable wars, augmented the power, and extended the fame, of a city, unrivalled in wealth, populousness, and splendour, and governed by laws and institutions worthy of its magnificence and renown. If Athens must perish, (as what human grandeur is not subject to decay?) let her never fall, at least through *our* pusillanimity, a fall that would cancel the merit of our former virtue, and destroy at once that edifice of glory which it has been the work of ages to rear. When our walls and harbours are no more; when the terror of our navy shall have ceased, and our external magnificence have fallen to decay, the glory of Athens shall remain: this

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is the prize which I have hitherto exhorted, and still exhort you to defend, regardless of the clamours of sloth, the suspicions of cowardice, or the persecution of envy."

Death and character of Pericles. Olymp. lxxxvii. 4. A. C. 429.

Such were the sentiments of Pericles, who, on this occasion, declared to his assembled countrymen, with the freedom of conscious merit, that he felt himself inferior to none in wisdom to discover, and abilities to explain and promote, the measures most honourable and useful; that he was a sincere and ardent lover of the republic, unbiassed by the dictates of selfishness, unseduced by the allurements of partiality. The anger of the Athenians evaporated in imposing on him a small fine, and shortly afterwards, they re-elected him general. The integrity and manly firmness of his mind restored the fainting courage of the republic. They rescued the dignity of Pericles from the rage of popular frenzy; but they could not defend his life against the infectious malignity of the pestilence. He died two years and six months after the commencement of the war. The character which he draws of himself is confirmed by the impartial voice of history, which adds a few circumstances fitted to confirm the texture of a virtuous and lasting fame. During the first invasion of the Peloponnesians, he declared that he would convey his extensive and valuable estate to the public, if it should be excepted from the general devastation, by the policy or the gratitude of Archidamus, his hereditary guest and friend.[30] Yet this generous

[30] Thucydid. p. 108.

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patriot lived with the most exemplary œconomy in his personal and domestic expence. His death-bed was surrounded by his numerous admirers, who dwelt with complacence on the illustrious exploits of his glorious life. While they recounted the wisdom of his government, and enumerated the long series of his victories by sea and land, "You forget," said the dying statesman and sage, "you forget the only valuable part of my character: none of my fellow-citizens was ever compelled, through any action of mine, to assume a mourning robe."[31] He expired, teaching an invaluable lesson to human kind, that in the last important hour, when all other objects disappear, or totally lose their value, the recollection of an innocent life is still present to the mind, and still affords consolation, more valuable than Pericles could derive from his nine trophies erected over the enemies of his country, from his long and prosperous administration of forty years, the depth of his political wisdom, the pre-eminence of his military and naval skill, and the immortal fame of his matchless eloquence.

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[31] Plut. in Pericl.

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Subsequent Events of the War. — Platæa taken. — Revolt of Lesbos. — Description and History of that Island. — Nature of its political Connection with Athens. — Address of Lesbos. — Its Capital besieged by the Athenians. — Measures of the Peloponnesians for relieving it. — Mitylené surrenders. — Deliberations in Athens concerning the Treatment of the Prisoners. — Resettlement of the Affairs of Lesbos. — The Corinthians foment Factions in Corcyra. — Sedition in that Island. — The contending Factions respectively supported by the Athenians and Peloponnesians. — Progress, Termination, and Consequences of the Sedition.

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Events of the four following years of the war. Olymp. lxxxvii. 4. A. C. 429—425.

THE dignity and vigour of the republic seemed to perish with Pericles, and several years elapsed, scarcely distinguished by any event that tended to vary the uniformity, much less to decide the fortune, of the war. While the Peloponnesians invaded Attica, the Athenian fleet annually ravaged the coast of Peloponnesus. In vain the inhabitants of that country, little accustomed to the sea, collected ships and used their utmost endeavours to contend with the experienced skill of the Athenian mariners. They were always defeated, and often by an inferior force; one proof among many, that naval superiority is slowly ac-

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quired, and slowly lost. Neither the Athenians nor the Peloponnesians derived any effectual assistance from their respective alliances with Sitalces and Perdiccas. The former, reinforced by many independent tribes of Thrace, who were allured to his standard by the hopes of plunder, poured down an hundred and fifty thousand men on the Macedonian coast. But a hasty agreement between the two kings dissipated that numerous and desultory band with the same rapidity with which it had been collected.[1]

One benefit, indeed, the Athenians received from Sitalces, if that can be reckoned a benefit, which enabled them to commit an action of enormous cruelty. He put into their hands Aristæus, the Corinthian, a bold and determined enemy of their republic; and actually travelling through Thrace into Persia, to solicit money from Artaxerxes to support the war against them. Both Aristæus and his colleagues in the embassy suffered an ignominious death.

Taking of Potidæa. Olymp. lxxxvii. 4. A. C. 429.

The success of the adverse parties was equally balanced in the sieges of Potidæa and Platæa. The former, having surrendered on capitulation, was occupied by new inhabitants. The expelled citizens retired to Olynthus and other places of the Chalcidicé, where they strengthened and exasperated the foes of Athens.

Of Platæa. Olymp. lxxxviii. 2. A. C. 427.

Platæa also capitulated, after a long and spirited resistance during five years. Notwithstanding the warm and affecting remonstrances of the citizens who

[1] Thucydid. p. 167—170.

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had acted such an illustrious part in the Persian war, when the Thebans behaved most disgracefully, the capitulation was shamefully violated by the Spartans, who sacrificed to the resentment of Thebes, the eternal enemy of Platæa, two hundred brave men, whose courage and fidelity merited a better fate. But the youth of Platæa still flourished in the bosom of Athens, and were destined, in a future age, to re-assume the dignity of independent government, which always formed the highest ambition of their small but magnanimous community.

Revolt of Lesbos.

Among the transactions of this otherwise unimportant period, happened the revolt of Lesbos, and the sedition of Corcyra. Both events deeply affected the interests of Athens; and the former is distinguished by such circumstances as serve to illustrate the political arrangements of the times, while the latter exhibits a striking but gloomy picture of Grecian manners.

Description and history of that island.

The island of Lesbos, extending above an hundred and fifty miles in circumference, is the largest, except Eubœa, in the Ægæan sea. Originally planted by Eolians, Lesbos was the mother of many Eolic colonies. They were established on the opposite continent, and separated from their metropolis by a strait of seven miles, which expands itself into the gulf of Thebé, and is beautifully diversified by the Hecatonnesian and Arginussian isles, of old sacred to Apollo. The happy temperature of the climate of Lesbos conspired with the rich fertility of the soil to produce those delicious fruits and those exquisite

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wines, which are still acknowledged by modern travellers to deserve the encomiums so liberally bestowed on them by ancient writers.[2] The convenience of its harbours furnished another source of wealth and advantage to this delightful island, which, as early as the age of Homer, was reckoned populous and powerful, and, like the rest of Greece, at that time, governed by the moderate jurisdiction of hereditary princes. The abuse of royal power occasioned the dissolution of monarchy in Lesbos, as well as in the neighbouring isles. The rival cities of Mitylené and Methymna contended for republican preeminence. The former prevailed, and having reduced Methymna, as well as six cities of inferior note, began to extend its dominion beyond the narrow bounds of the island, and conquered a considerable part of Troas. Meanwhile the internal government of Mitylené was often disturbed by sedition, and sometimes usurped by tyrants. The wise Pittacus, contemporary, and rival of Solon, endeavoured to remedy these evils by giving his countrymen a body of laws, comprised in six hundred verses, which adjusted their political rights, and regulated their behaviour and manners. The Lesbians afterwards underwent those general revolutions, to which both the islands and the continent of Asia Minor were exposed from the Lydian and Persian power. Delivered from the yoke of Persia by

[2] Mons. de Guys, Tournefort, &c. agree with Horace (passim) and Strabo, l. xiii. p. 584—657. from whom the following particulars, in the text, concerning Lesbos, are extracted.

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the successful valour of Athens and Sparta, the Lesbians, as well as all the Greek settlements around them, spurned the tyrannical authority of Sparta and Pausanias, and ranged themselves under the honourable colours of Athens, which they thenceforth continued to respect in peace, and to follow in war.

Nature of its political connection with Athens.

In the exercise of power, the Athenians displayed principles totally different from those by which they had attained it. The confederacy between Athens and Lesbos was still supported, however, by mutual fear, rather than by reciprocal affection. During peace, the Lesbians dreaded the navy of Athens; the Athenians feared to lose the assistance of Lesbos in war. Besides this, the Athenians were of the Ionic, the Lesbians of the Eolic, race; and the latter justly regretted that the allies of Athens should be successively reduced to the condition of subjects. They perceived the artful policy of that republic in allowing the Chians and Lesbians alone to retain the semblance of liberty. While the Chians and Lesbians, still free in appearance, assisted in subduing the other confederates of Athens, that ambitious republic was always furnished with a plausible justification of her general oppression and tyranny; since it was natural to imagine that men, left to the unrestrained liberty of choice, should, in matters indifferent to themselves, prefer the cause of justice to that of usurpation. But even the apparent freedom which the Lesbians enjoyed had become extremely precarious. They felt themselves under a disagree-

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able necessity to soothe, to bribe, and to flatter the Athenian demagogues, and in all their transactions with that imperious people, to testify mortifying deference or abject submission. Notwithstanding their watchful attention never designedly to offend, they were continually endangered by the quarrelsome humour of a capricious multitude, and had reason to dread, lest, in consequence of some unexpected gust of passion, they should be compelled to demolish their walls, and to surrender their shipping; the punishments already inflicted on such of the neighbouring islands as had incurred the displeasure of Athens.

Measures of the Lesbians previous to their revolt.

This uneasy situation naturally disposed the Lesbians, amidst the calamities of the second Peloponnesian invasion, heightened by the plague at Athens, to watch an opportunity for revolt. The following year was employed in assembling the scattered inhabitants of the island within the walls of Mitylené, in strengthening these walls, in fortifying their harbours, in augmenting their fleet, and in collecting troops and provisions from the fertile shores of the Euxine. But in the fourth year of the war, their design, yet unripe for execution, was made known to the Athenians by the inhabitants of Tenedos, the neighbours and enemies of Lesbos, as well as by the citizens of Methymna, the ancient rival of Mitylené, and by several malcontents in the Lesbian capital. Notwithstanding the concurrence of such powerful testimonies, the Athenian magistrates affected to disbelieve intelligence which their distressed circumstances rendered peculiarly alarming. The

Olymp. lxxxviii. 1. A. C. 428.

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Lesbians, it was said, could never think of forsaking the alliance of a country which had always treated them with such distinguished favour, how powerfully soever they might be urged to that measure by the Thebans, their Eolian brethren, and the Spartans, their ancient confederates. Ambassadors, however, were sent to Lesbos, desiring an explanation of rumours so dishonourable to the fidelity and gratitude of the island.

Activity of Athens.

The ambassadors having confirmed the report, Athens equipped a fleet of forty sail, intending to attack the enemy by surprise, while they celebrated, with universal consent, the anniversary festival of Apollo, on the promontory of Malea. But this design was rendered abortive by the diligence of a Mitylenian traveller, who, passing from Athens to Eubœa, proceeded southward to Geraistos, and, embarking in a merchant vessel, reached Lesbos in less than three days from the time that he undertook this important service. His seasonable advice not only prevented the Mitylenians from leaving their city, but prepared them to appear, at the arrival of the enemy, in a tolerable posture of defence. This state of preparation enabled them to obtain from Cleippidas, the Athenian admiral, a suspension of hostilities, until they dispatched an embassy to Athens, to remove, as they pretended, the groundless resentment of the people, and to give ample satisfaction to the magistrates.

Address of Lesbos.

On the part of the Lesbians, this transaction was nothing more than a contrivance to gain

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time. They expected no favour or forgiveness from the Athenian assembly; and while this illusive negociation was carrying on at Athens, other ambassadors repaired secretly to Sparta, requesting that the Lesbians might be admitted into the Peloponnesian confederacy, and thus entitled to the protection of that powerful league. The Spartans referred them to the general assembly, which was to be soon held at Olympia, to solemnize the most splendid of all the Grecian festivals. After the games were ended, and the Athenians, who little suspected that such matters were in agitation, had returned home, the Lesbian ambassadors were favourably heard in a general convention of the Peloponnesian representatives or deputies, from whom they received assurance of immediate and effectual assistance.

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Olymp. lxxxviii. 1. A. C. 428.

This promise, however, was not punctually performed. The eyes of the Athenians opened to their danger; and, while the Peloponnesians prepared or deliberated, their more active enemies had already taken the field. Various skirmishes, in which the islanders showed little vigour in their own defence, engaged the neighbouring states of Lemnos and Imbros, to send, on the first summons, considerable supplies of troops to their Athenian confederates; but, as the combined forces were still insufficient completely to invest Mitylené, a powerful reinforcement was sent from Athens, and before the beginning of winter, the place was blocked up by land, while an Athenian fleet occupied the harbour.

Mitylené besieged.

The unfavourable season, and still more, that

Measures of the Pe-

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Peloponnesians for relieving it.

dilatoriness which so often obstructed the measures of the confederates, prevented timely aid from arriving at Mitylené. But, in order to make a diversion in favour of their new allies, the Peloponnesians assembled a considerable armament at the isthmus, intending to convey their ships over land from Corinth to the sea of Athens, that they might thus infest the Athenian shores with their fleet, while the army carried on its usual ravages in the central parts of Attica. The activity of the Athenians defeated this design. Notwithstanding their numerous squadrons on the coasts of Peloponnesus, Thrace, and Lesbos, they immediately fitted out an hundred sail to defend their own shores. The Peloponnesian sailors, who had been hastily collected from the maritime towns, soon became disgusted with an expedition attended with unforeseen difficulties; and, as autumn advanced, the militia from the inland country grew impatient to return to their fields and vineyards. During winter, the Mitylenians were still disapppointed in their hope of relief. They were encouraged, however, to persevere in resistance, by the arrival of Salæthus, a Spartan general of considerable merit, who having landed in an obscure harbour of the island, travelled by land towards Mitylené; and, during the obscurity of night, passed the Athenian wall of circumvallation, through favour of a breach made by a torrent. Salæthus gave the besieged fresh assurances that a powerful fleet would be sent to their assistance early in the spring; and that, at the same time, the Athenians should be harassed by an invasion

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more terrible and destructive than any which they had yet experienced. CHAP. XVI.

Imprudent conduct of Alcidas. Olymp. lxxviii. 2. A. C. 427.

The latter part of the promise was indeed performed. The Peloponnesians invaded Attica. Whatever had been spared in former incursions, now fell a prey to their fury. But after spring had considerably advanced, the long-expected fleet was looked for in vain. The same procrastination and difficulties still retarded the preparations of the confederates; and when at length forty sail were collected, the command was bestowed on the Spartan Alcidas, a man totally devoid of that spirit and judgment essential to the character of a naval commander. Instead of sailing directly to the relief of Mitylené, he wasted much precious time in pursuing the Athenian merchantmen, in harassing the unfortified islands, and in alarming the defenceless and unwarlike inhabitants of Ionia, who could scarcely recover from their astonishment, at seeing a Peloponnesian fleet in those seas. Many trading vessels, that sailed between the numerous islands and harbours on that extensive coast, fell into the hands of Alcidas; for when they descried his squadron, they attempted not to avoid it; many fearlessly approached it, as certainly Athenian. In consequence of this imprudence, Alcidas took a great number of prisoners, whom he butchered in cold blood at Myonnesus.

Mitylené surrenders. Olymp. lxxviii. 2. A. C. 427.

This barbarity only disgraced himself, and injured the Spartan cause in Asia, many cities of which were previously ripe for revolt. Before he attempted to accomplish the main object of

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his expedition, the opportunity was for ever lost by the surrender of Mitylené. Despair of assistance, and scarcity of provisions, had obliged Salæthus, who began himself by this time to suspect that the Peloponnesians had laid aside all thoughts of succouring the place, to arm [3] the populace, in order to make a vigorous assault on the Athenian lines. But the lower ranks of men, who in Lesbos, as well as in all the Grecian isles, naturally favoured the cause of Athens, the avowed patron of democracy, no sooner received their armour, than they refused to obey their superiors, and threatened, that unless the corn were speedily brought into the market-place, and equally divided among all the citizens, they would instantly submit to the besiegers. The aristocratical party prudently yielded to the torrent of popular fury, which they had not strength to resist; and justly apprehensive, lest a more obstinate defence might totally exclude them from the benefit of capitulation, they surrendered to Paches, the Athenian commander, on condition that none of the prisoners should be enslaved or put to death, until their agents, who were immediately sent to implore the clemency of Athens, should return with the sentence of that republic.

Terror of the Lesbian captives.

The terms were accepted and ratified; but such were the furious resentments which prevailed in that age, such the dark suspicions, and such the total disregard to all laws of justice and humanity,

[3] He gave the populace, who were before light armed, heavy armour. Thucydid. p. 188. English cannot imitate his expression: *δπλίζει τον δημον προτέρον ψιλον οντα.*

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that the Athenian army had no sooner taken possession of the place, than the chief authors and abettors of the revolt, judging it imprudent to trust their safety to the faith of treaties, and the sanctity of oaths, flew for protection to their temples and altars. This unseasonable diffidence (for Paches appears to have united uncommon humanity with a daring spirit, and great military abilities) betrayed conscious guilt, and enabled the Athenians to distinguish between their friends and enemies. The latter were protected by Paches, and prevailed on to withdraw from their sanctuaries. He afterwards sent them to the isle of Tenedos, until their fate, as well as that of their fellow-citizens, should be finally determined by the Athenian republic.

They are doomed to death by an Athenian decree.

Immediately after the arrival of the Mitylenian ambassadors, the people of Athens had assembled to deliberate on this important subject. Agitated by the giddy transports of triumph over the rebellious ingratitude and perfidy of a people, who, though distinguished by peculiar favours, had deserted their protectors in the season of danger, the Athenians doomed to death all the Mitylenian citizens, and condemned the women and children to perpetual servitude. In one day the bill was proposed, the decree passed, and the same evening a galley was dispatched to Paches, conveying this cruel and bloodyy resolution. But the night left room for reflection; and the feelings of humanity were awakened by the stings of remorse. In the morning, having assembled, as usual, in the public square, men were surprised

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and pleased to find the sentiments of their neighbours exactly corresponding with their own. Their dejected countenances met each other; they lamented, with one accord, the rashness and ferocity of their passion, and bewailed the unhappy fate of Mitylené, the destined object of their misguided phrenzy. The Mitylenian ambassadors availed themselves of this sudden change of sentiment: a new assembly was convened, and the question submitted to a second deliberation.

Character of Cleon.

A turbulent impetuous eloquence had raised the audacious profligacy of Cleon, from the lowest rank of life, to a high degree of authority in the Athenian assembly. The multitude were deceived by his artifices, and pleased with his frontless impudence, which they called honest boldness, and manly openness of character. His manners they approved in proportion as they resembled their own; and the worst of his vices found advocates among the dupes of his pretended patriotism. This violent demagogue, whose arrogant[4] presumption so unworthily succeeded the enlightened magnanimity of Pericles, had, in the former assembly, proposed and carried the sanguinary decree against Mitylené. He still persevered in supporting that atrocious measure, and upbraided the weak and wavering counsels of his countrymen, liable to be shaken by every

[4] The character of Cleon, sketched in miniature by Thucydides, pp. 193. and 266. is painted at full length by Aristophanes, in his comedy of the Ἱππεῖς, "The Horsemen." Yet we could not safely trust the description of the angry satirist, who bore a personal grudge to Cleon, unless the principal strokes were justified by the impartial narrative of Thucydides.

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gust of passion, and totally incapable of that stability essential in the management, indeed, of all great affairs, but particularly indispensable in the government of distant dependencies. CHAP. XVI.

" Such a temper of mind (he had often ventured to declare, and would repeat the same disagreeable truth as often as their folly obliged him,) was alike unworthy, and incapable, of command. That a democracy was unfit for sovereign rule, past experience convinced him, and the present instance now confirmed his opinion. The empire of Athens could not be maintained without an undivided attachment, an unalterable adherence, to the interest and honour of the republic. But the masters of Greece were the slaves of their own capricious passions; excited at will by the perfidious voice of venal speakers, bribed to betray them. Lulled to a fatal repose by the softness of melodious words, they forgot the dignity of the state, and restrained their personal resentment against multiplied and unprovoked injuries. What was still more dangerous, they invited, by an ill-judged lenity, the imitation and continuance of such crimes as must terminate in public disgrace and irreparable ruin. What else can be expected from pardoning the aggravated guilt of Mitylené? Encouraged by this weakness, must not the neighbouring cities and islands, whose resources form the principal vigour of the republic, greedily seize the first opportunity of shaking off the yoke, which they have long reluctantly borne; and follow the example of a revolt, which, without presenting Cleon enforces that decree.

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them with the fear of danger, promised them the hope of deliverance?"

Deodatus opposes it with equal address and spirit.

This sanguinary speech was answered by Deodatus, a man endowed with a happy moderation of mind, joined to a profound knowledge of government, and a deep insight into human nature. In the former assembly, this respectable orator had ventured, almost single and alone, to plead the cause of the Mitylenians, and to assert the rights of humanity. He observed, "that assemblies were liable to be misled by the fury of resentment, as well as by the weakness of compassion; and that errors of the former kind were productive of consequences not less destructive, and always followed by a far more bitter repentance. Against vague slanders and calumny no man is secure; but a true patriot must learn to despise such unmanly reproaches. Undaunted by opposition, he will offer good counsel, to which there are not any greater enemies than haste and anger. For my part, I stand up neither to defend the Mitylenians, nor to waste time in fruitless accusations. They have injured us most outrageously, yet I would not advise you to butcher them, unless *that* can be proved expedient; neither, were they objects of forgiveness, would I advise you to pardon them [5], unless that were conducive to the public interest, the only point on which our present deliberation turns. Guided by vulgar prejudices, Cleon has

[5] This is speaking like an orator. It will appear in the sequel, that Deodatus by no means considered the innocence or guilt of the Mitylenians as things indifferent.

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loudly asserted, that the destruction of the Mitylenians is necessary to deter neighbouring cities from rebellion. But distant subjects must be kept in obedience by the mildness of discretionary caution, not by the rigour of sanguinary examples. What people were ever so mad as to revolt, without expecting, either through their domestic strength, or the assistance of foreign powers, to make good their pretensions? Men who have known liberty, how sweet it is, ought not to be punished too severely for aspiring at that inestimable enjoyment. But their growing disaffection must be watched with care, and anticipated by diligence; they must be prevented from taking the first step towards emancipation; and taught, if possible, to regard it as a thing altogether unattainable.

"Yet such is the nature of man, considered either individually or collectively, that a law of infallible prevention will never be enacted. Of all crimes that any reasonable creature can commit, Desire is the fore-runner, and Hope the attendant. These invisible principles within, are too powerful for external terrors; nor has the increasing severity of laws rendered crimes less frequent in latter times, than during the mildness of the heroic ages, when few punishments were capital. While human nature remains the same, weakness will be distrustful, necessity will be daring, poverty will beget fraud, power will excite injustice, misery will sink into meanness, and prosperity swell into presumption. There are other contingencies, which stir up the mutiny

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of passions, too stubborn for controul. The authority of government can neither change the combination of events, nor interrupt the occasions of fortune. Impelled by such causes, the selfish desires of men will hurry them into wickedness and vice, whatever penalties await them. The imagination becomes familiar with one scale of punishment, as well as with another; and, in every degree, hope renders it alike ineffectual and impotent; since neither individuals nor communities would commit wrong if they believed that it must infallibly subject them to punishment, small or great. When individuals venture on crimes, they always expect to elude the vengeance of law. When communities rebel, they expect to render their revolt, not the occasion of triumph to their enemies, but the means of their own deliverance and security.

"The severe punishment of Mitylené cannot, therefore, produce the good consequences with which Cleon has flattered you. But this cruel measure will be attended with irreparable prejudice to your interest. It will estrange the affections of your allies; provoke the resentment of Greece; excite the indignation of mankind; and, instead of preventing rebellion, render it more frequent and more dangerous. When all hopes of success have vanished, your rebellious subjects will never be persuaded to return to their duty. They will seek death in the field, rather than await it from the hand of the executioner. Though reduced to the last extremity, they will spurn submission, and gathering courage from

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despair, either repel your assaults, or fall an useless prey, weak and exhausted, incapable of indemnifying you for the expence of the war, or of raising those subsidies and contributions, which rendered their subjugation a reasonable object either of interest or ambition. CHAP. XVI.

"The revolt of Mitylené was the work of an aristocratical faction, fomented by the Lacedæmonians and Thebans. The great body of the people had no sooner provided themselves with arms, than they discovered their affection for Athens. It would be most cruel and most ungrateful to confound the innocent with the guilty, to involve friends and foes in undistinguished ruin. Yet this odious measure would show more weakness than cruelty, more folly than injustice. What benefit could the enemies of Athens more earnestly desire? What boon could the aristocratical factions, so profusely scattered over Greece, more anxiously request from Heaven? Furnished with your sanguinary decree against Mitylené, they would for ever alienate from the republic the affections of her subjects and confederates; for having once seduced them to revolt, they might unanswerably convince them, that safety could only be purchased by persevering in rebellion, and that to return to duty was to submit to death."

The moderation and good sense of Deodatus (such was the influence of Cleon) were approved only by a small majority of voices. Yet it remained uncertain, whether this late and reluctant repentance would avail the Mitylenians, who, His opinion prevails.

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before any advice of it arrived, might be condemned and executed in consequence of the former decree. A galley was instantly furnished with every thing that might promote expedition. The Mitylenian deputies promised invaluable rewards to the rowers. But the fate of a numerous, and lately flourishing community, still depended on the uncertainty of winds and currents. The first advice-boat had sailed, as the messenger of bad news, with a slow and melancholy progress. The second advanced with the rapid movements of hope and joy. Not an adverse blast opposed her course. The necessity of food and sleep never restrained a moment the labour of the oar: and her diligence was rewarded by reaching Lesbos in time to check the cruel hand of the executioner.

Narrow escape of the Mitylenians.

The bloody sentence had been just read, and orders were preparing for carrying it into effect, when the critical arrival of the Athenian galley converted the lamentable outcries, or gloomy despair of a whole republic, into expressions of admiration and gratitude.

Resettlement of affairs in Lesbos. Olymp. lxxxviii. 2. A. C. 427.

The punishment, however, of Mitylené was still sufficiently severe, even according to the rigorous maxims of Grecian policy. The prisoners, who had been sent to Tenedos, were transported to Athens. They exceeded a thousand in number, and were indiscriminately condemned to death.

Salæthus, the Spartan general, shared the same fate, after descending to many mean contrivances to save his life. The walls of Mitylené were de-

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molished, its shipping was sent to Athens, and its territory divided into three thousand portions, of which three hundred were consecrated to the gods, and the rest distributed by lot among the people of Athens. The Lesbians were still allowed to cultivate, as tenants, their own fields, paying for each share an annual rent amounting in value to six pounds nine shillings sterling.[6]

Merit and persecution of Paches.

The activity and judgment of Paches thus effected an important conquest to his country. Though the affairs of Lesbos might have required his undivided attention, he no sooner was apprised of the appearance of the Peloponnesian fleet, than he immediately put to sea, protected the allies of Athens, and chased the enemy from those shores. During the whole time of his command, he behaved with firmness tempered by humanity. But, at his return to Athens, he met with the usual reward of superior merit. He was accused of misconduct; and finding sentence ready to be pronounced against him, his indignation rose so high, that he slew himself in court.[7]

Operations of the Spartan fleet.

The Spartan admiral, Alcidas, met, on the other hand, with a reception (such is the blindness of popular prejudice!) far better than belonged to his behaviour. The Peloponnesian fleet of forty sail, imprudently intrusted to his command, retired ingloriously, after an expensive and fruitless expedition, to the protection of their friendly harbours. A northerly wind, however, drove them on the shores of Crete: from whence

[6] Thucydid. p. 173—206. [7] Plutarch. in Nicia, & in Aristid.

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they dropped in successively to the port of Elian Cyllené, which had recovered the disaster inflicted on it by the Corcyreans at the beginning of the war, and become the ordinary rendezvous of the Peloponnesian fleet. In this place, Alcidas found thirteen galleys commanded by Brasidas, a Spartan of distinguished valour and abilities, purposely chosen to assist the admiral with his counsels. This small squadron had orders to join the principal armament; with which the confederates, as their design had miscarried at Lesbos, purposed to undertake an expedition against Corcyra, then agitated by the tumult of a dangerous sedition.

Intrigues of the Corinthians with the Corcyrean prisoners,

Among the hostilities already related between the republics of Corinth and Corcyra, we described the enterprises by which the Corinthians had possessed themselves of twelve hundred Corcyrean prisoners. Many of these persons were descended from the first families in the island; a circumstance on which the policy of Corinth founded an extensive plan of artifice and ambition. The Corcyreans, instead of feeling the rigours of captivity, or experiencing the stern severity of republican resentment, were treated with the liberal and endearing kindness of Grecian hospitality. Having acquired their confidence by good offices, the Corinthians insinuated to them, in the unguarded hours of convivial merriment, the danger as well as the disgrace of their connection with Athens, the imperious tyrant of her allies; and represented their shameful ingratitude in deserting Corinth, to which the colony of Corcyra owed not only its early happiness and

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prosperity, but its original establishment and existence. These arguments, seasonably repeated, and urged with much address, at length proved effectual. The Corcyreans recovered their freedom, and returned to their native country; and while they pretended to be collecting the sum of eight hundred talents (about an hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling) to pay their ransom, they left nothing untried to detach Corcyra from the Athenian interest.

excite dangerous factions in Corcyra.

Their first expedient for accomplishing this purpose was, to traduce the popular leaders, all of them stedfast partizans to that republic. Accusations, impeachments, all the artifices and chicane of legal prosecution, were directed and played off against them. The demagogues, who were not of a temper to brook such injuries, retorted on their antagonists with equal ingenuity, and far superior success. Peithias, the most distinguished advocate of the Athenian or democratic party, accused five ringleaders of the opposite faction of having destroyed the fence which inclosed the grove of Jupiter; a trespass estimated by the Corcyrean law at a severe pecuniary punishment.[8] In vain the persons accused denied the charge; in vain, after conviction before the senate, they fled as supplicants to the altars. They could obtain no mitigation of the amercement. The demagogue was inflexible; and his

[8] The fine was for every pale, a stater (one pound and nine pence sterling). Such causes were frequent in other parts of Greece, as we learn from the oration of Lysias in defence of a citizen accused of cutting down a consecrated olive. See my translation of Lysias and Isocrates, p. 377.

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influence with his colleagues in the senate, of which he happened that year to be a member, determined them to execute the law in its utmost rigour.

Assassination of the demagogues.

Exasperated by this severity, and not doubting that during the administration of the present senate, many similar prosecutions would be raised against them, the aristocratical party entered into a conspiracy for defending themselves and their country against the oppressive injustice of Athens and Athenian partizans. On this emergency they acted like men who knew the danger of delay. Having fortified their cause with a sufficient number of adherents, they armed themselves with concealed daggers, suddenly rushed into the senate-house, and assassinated Peithias, with sixty of his friends. This boldness struck their opponents with terror. Such persons as felt themselves most obnoxious to the conspirators, immediately fled to the harbour, embarked, and sailed to Athens.

Sedition in Corcyra. Olymp. lxxxviii. 2. A. C. 427.

The people of Corcyra, thus deprived of their leaders by an event equally unexpected and atrocious, were seized with such astonishment as suspended their power of action. Before they had sufficiently recovered themselves to take the proper measures for revenge, or even for defence, the arrival of a Corinthian vessel, and a Lacedæmonian embassy, encouraged their bloody opponents to complete the destruction which they had begun. The attack was made at the hour of full assembly; the forum, or public square, presented a scene of horror; the streets of Corcyra streamed with blood. The unguarded citizens

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were incapable of making resistance against such sudden and unforeseen fury. They fled in trepidation from the forum, and the more spacious streets. Some took possession of the citadel; others, of the Hillæan harbour; and in general occupied, before the evening, the higher and more remote parts of the town. Their adversaries kept possession of the market-place, round which most of their houses stood, or assembled in the principal harbour, that points towards Epirus, from which they expected succour. The day following was spent in doubtful skirmishes, and in summoning from the country the assistance of the peasants, or rather slaves, by whom chiefly the lands of the island were cultivated. These naturally ranged themselves on the side of the people: the Corcyrean women zealously embraced the same party, and sustained the tumult with more than female courage. One inactive day intervened. The partizans of aristocracy were reinforced by eight hundred auxiliaries from the continent of Epirus. But in the succeeding engagement, the numbers and fury of the slaves, who seized the present opportunity to resent the barbarous cruelty of their respective masters; and the generous ardour of the women, rendered the friends of liberty completely victorious. The vanquished fled towards the forum and the great harbour. Even these posts they soon despaired of being able to maintain; and, to escape immediate death, set fire to the surrounding houses, which being soon thrown into a blaze, presented an impervious obstacle to the rage of the assailants. The most beautiful part of

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Corcyra was thus destroyed in one night: the houses, shops, magazines, and much valuable merchandise, were totally consumed; and, had an easterly wind aided the conflagration, the whole city must in a short time have been reduced to ashes. Amidst this scene of confusion and horror, the Corinthian galley, together with the auxiliaries from Epirus, retired in consternation from a place that seemed doomed to inevitable destruction.

An Athenian squadron arrives at Corcyra.

Next day twelve Athenian galleys arrived from Naupactus, containing, besides their ordinary complement of men, five hundred heavy-armed Messenians. Nicostratus, who commanded this armament, had, upon the first intelligence of the sedition, hastened with the utmost celerity to support the cause of Athens and democracy. He had the good fortune not only to anticipate the Peloponnesian squadron, which was so anxiously expected by the enemy, but to find his friends triumphant. They had obtained, however, a melancholy triumph over the splendour of their country, which, if its factions were not speedily reconciled, was threatened with total ruin. Nicostratus omitted nothing that seemed proper to heal the wounds of that afflicted commonwealth. By authority, entreaties, and commands, he persuaded the contending parties to accommodate matters between themselves, and to renew their alliance with Athens. Having happily terminated this business, he was intent on immediate departure; but the managers for the people proposed, that he should leave five of his ships with them, to deter the enemy from

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any fresh commotion, and take in exchange five of theirs, which should be instantly manned to attend him on his station. With this proposal he complied; and the Corcyreans selected the mariners destined to sail with Nicostratus. Those named for this service were, to a man, partisans of the oligarchy and Lacedæmon; a circumstance which created in them just alarm, lest they should be transported to Athens, and notwithstanding the faith of treaties, condemned to death. They took refuge in the temple of Castor and Pollux: the assurances of Nicostratus could scarcely remove them from this sanctuary; and all his declarations and oaths were unable to prevail on them to embark. The opposite party asserted, that this want of confidence betrayed not only the consciousness of past, but the fixed purpose of future, guilt; and would have immediately dispatched them with their daggers, had not Nicostratus interposed. Terrified at these proceedings, the unhappy victims of popular malice and suspicion assembled, to the number of four hundred, and retired with one accord, as supplicants, into the temple of Juno. From this sanctuary they were persuaded to arise, and transported to a neighbouring island, or rather rock, small, barren, and uninhabited. There they remained four days, supplied barely with the means of subsistence, and impatiently waiting their fate.

The Peloponnesian fleet appears off the coast.

In this posture of affairs a numerous fleet was seen approaching from the south. This was the long-expected squadron of fifty-three ships com-

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manded by Alcidas and Brasidas. With the unfortunate slowness inherent in all the measures of the confederacy, this armament arrived too late to support the sinking cause of their friends. The Peloponnesian commanders, however, might still expect to take an useless but agreeable vengeance on their enemies. To accomplish this design they prepared to attack the harbour of Corcyra, while all was yet hurry and confusion. The islanders had sixty vessels fit for sea, in which they embarked with the utmost expedition, and successively sailed forth as each happened to be ready. Their ardour and impatience disdained the judicious advice of Nicostratus, who alone, calm and unmoved amidst a scene of unexpected danger, exhorted them to keep the harbour until they were all prepared to advance in line of battle, generously offering, with his twelve Athenian gallies, to sustain the first assaults of the enemy.

A sea-fight, in which the Peloponnesians prevail.

The Peloponnesians, observing the hostile armament scattered and unsupported, divided their own fleet into two squadrons. The one, consisting of twenty gallies, attacked the Corcyreans; the other, amounting to thirty-three, endeavoured to surround the Athenians. But the address of the Athenian mariners frustrated this attempt. Their front was extended with equal order and celerity. They assaulted at once, the opposite wings of the Peloponnesian fleet, intercepted their motion, and skilfully encircled them around, hoping to drive their ships against each other, and to throw them into universal disorder.

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Perceiving these manœuvres, the ships which followed the Corcyreans left off the pursuit, and steered to support the main squadron: and now, with their whole embodied strength, they prepared to pour on the Athenians. These prudently declined the shock of superior force: but the glory of their retreat was equal to a victory. They seasonably shifted their helms, slowly and regularly gave way, and thus covered the retreat of their Corcyrean allies, who, having already lost thirteen vessels, were totally unable to renew the engagement.

The misconduct of Alcidas saves Corcyra.

Having reached the harbour, the Corcyreans still feared lest the enemy, in pursuance of their victory, should make a descent on the coast, and even assault the city. But the manly counsels of Brasidas, who strongly recommended the latter measure, were defeated by the timidity and incapacity of Alcidas. The Corcyreans seized, therefore, the present opportunity to remove the supplicants from the uninhabited island to the temple of Juno, as less exposed there, to be discovered and taken up by the Peloponnesian fleet. Next day they entered into accommodation with these unhappy men, and even admitted several of them to embark in thirty vessels, which they hastily equipped, as the last defence of the island. The Peloponnesians, meanwhile, still prevented, by the dastardly counsels of Alcidas, from attacking the capital, wreaked their resentment on the adjacent territory. But before the dawn of the succeeding day, they were alarmed by lights on the northern shore of Leucadia, which, by their num-

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ber and disposition, signified the approach of an Athenian fleet of sixty sail.

The Athenians reinforced.

The situation of the invaders was now extremely dangerous. If they stretched out to sea, they might be obliged to encounter the unbroken vigour of the Athenians: if they cruised off the coast, they would be compelled to contend, not only with the power of Athens, but with the resentment of Corcyra. One measure alone promised the hope of safety: it was immediately adopted. Having crept along the shore to Leucadia, they carried their vessels across the isthmus[9], afterwards overflowed by the sea, but which then joined the peninsula, now the island of Leucas, to the adjacent coast of Acarnania. From thence sailing through the narrow seas, which separate the neighbouring isles from the continent, they escaped without discovery, and safely arrived in the harbour of Cyllené.

The Peloponnesians retire from Corcyra.

Massacre of the Lacedæmonian partisans.

The democratical party in Corcyra soon perceived the flight of the enemy, and descried the approach of the Athenian fleet, commanded by Eurymedon. These fortunate events, which ought in generous minds to have effaced the dark impressions of enmity and revenge, only enabled the Corcyreans to display the deep malignity of their character. They commanded the thirty gallies, recently manned, to pass in review, and in proportion as they discovered their enemies, punished them with immediate death. Fifty of the principal citizens, who still clung to the altars

[9] D'Anville considers the ancient Leucadia as an island; Ptolemy speaks of it as a peninsula.

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in the temple of Juno, they seduced from their asylum, and instantly butchered. CHAP. XVI.

Malignant passions of the Corcyreans.

Politics and party formed the pretence for violence, while individuals gratified their private passions, and wreaked vengeance on their personal foes. The sedition became every hour more fierce: the confusion thickened; the whole city was filled with consternation and horror. The altars and images of the gods were surrounded by votaries, whom even the terrors of a superstitious age could no longer protect. The miserable victims were dragged from the most revered temples, whose walls and pavement were now first stained with civil blood. Many withdrew themselves by a voluntary death from the fury of their enemies. In every house, and in every family, scenes were transacted too horrid for description. Parents, children, brothers, and pretended friends, seized the desired moment for gratifying their latent malignity, and perpetrating crimes without a name. The unfeeling Eurymedon (whose character, as will shortly appear, was a disgrace to human nature) showed neither ability nor inclination to stop the carnage. During the space of six days that his fleet continued in the Corcyrean harbour, the actors in this lamentable tragedy continually aggravated the enormity of their guilt, and improved in the refinement of their cruelty. A dreadful calm succeeded this violent agitation. Five hundred partisans of aristocracy escaped to the coast of Epirus; and the Athenian fleet retired.

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The aristocratical party receive assistance from Epirus.

The fugitives, instead of rejoicing in their safety, thought only of revenge. They sent agents to Lacedæmon and Corinth. By describing their sufferings to the astonished Epirots, they excited their compassion, and acquired their assistance. The severity of the prevailing party in Corcyra increased the number of outlaws; who, at length, finding themselves sufficiently powerful to attack and conquer the island, which, from the moment of their banishment, they had infested by naval descents, sailed with their whole strength for that purpose in boats provided by the Barbarians. In landing at Corcyra, the rowers drove with such violence against the shore, as broke many of their vessels in pieces; the rest they immediately burned, disdaining safety, unless purchased by victory. This desperate measure deterred opposition: they advanced, seized, and fortified, Mount Istoné; a strong post in the neighbourhood of the city, from which they ravaged the territory, and subjected their enemies to the multiplied evils of war and famine.

The Athenians again arrive in the island. Olymp. lxxxviii. 4. A. C. 425.

An epidemical disorder increased the measure of their calamities. The flames of civil discord, which had never been thoroughly extinguished, again broke out within the walls. The misery of the Corcyreans was verging to despair, when an Athenian fleet of forty sail appeared off the coast. This armament was commanded by Eurymedon and Sophocles. It was principally destined against Sicily, as we shall have occasion to relate, but ordered in its voyage thither to touch at Corcyra, and regulate the affairs of that island.

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This unexpected assistance enabled the besieged to become the besiegers. The outworks and defences of Mount Istoné were successively taken, and the parties who defended them gradually retired to the more elevated branches, and, at length, to the very summit of the mountain. They were on the point of being driven from thence, and of falling into the hands of enemies exasperated by innumerable injuries suffered and inflicted. Alarmed by this reflection, they called out to the Athenians for quarter, and surrendered to Eurymedon and Sophocles, on condition that their fate should be decided by the people of Athens. They were sent prisoners to the small island of Ptychia, lying a little eastward of the city of Corcyra, till it should be found convenient to transport them to Athens, and commanded not to make any attempt to stir from thence, under pain of annulling the capitulation which had been granted them.

Perfidious cruelty of the Corcyreans;

If the malignity of the Corcyrean populace had not exceeded the ordinary standard of human pravity, their resentment must have been softened by the sudden transition wrought by accident in their favour. But their first concern was to intercept the precarious clemency of Athens, and to make sure the destruction of their adversaries. This atrocious design was executed by a stratagem equally detestable, uniting, by a singular combination, whatever is savage in ferocity, and base in perfidy. By means of proper agents dispatched secretly to Ptychia, the leaders of the popular faction acquainted those of the prisoners,

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with whom, in peaceable times, they had respectively lived in habits of intimacy, that the Athenians had determined to give them up indiscriminately to the fury of the populace. Pretending much regret that persons in whom they once had so tender a concern, should share the common calamity, they exhorted them, by all possible means, to contrive their escape, and offered to provide them with a bark for that purpose. The known cruelty of Eurymedon made the artifice succeed. The bark was already launched from the island; the terms of the capitulation were thus infringed; the deluded victims were apprehended in the very act of departure, seized, bound, and delivered into the hands of their inexorable enemies.

and of the Athenian commanders, Eurymedon and Sophocles.

The Athenian commanders, Eurymedon and Sophocles, favoured the deceit, because, as they were themselves obliged to proceed towards Sicily, they envied the honour that would accrue to their successors in conducting the captives to Athens. To gratify this meanness of soul without example, they permitted barbarities beyond belief.

Unexampled barbarities committed in Corcyra.

The unhappy prisoners were first confined in a dungeon. Dragged successively from thence, in parties of twenty at a time, they were compelled to pass in pairs, their hands tied behind their backs, between two ranks of their enemies, armed with whips, prongs, and every instrument of licentious and disgraceful torture. The wretches left in prison were long ignorant of the ignominious cruelty inflicted on their companions; but,

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as soon as they learned the abominable scenes transacted without, they refused to quit their confinement, guarded the entrance, and invited, with one consent, the Athenians to murder them. But the Athenians wanted either humanity or firmness to commit this kind cruelty. The Corcyrean populace ventured not to force a passage from despair. They mounted the prison walls, uncovered the roof, and overwhelmed those below with stones, darts, and arrows. These weapons were destructive to many, and furnished others with the means of destroying themselves or each other. They laid down their heads, opened their breasts, exposed their necks, mutually soliciting, in plaintive or frantic accents, the fatal stroke. The whole night (for night intervened) was spent in this horrid scene; and the morning presented a spectacle too shocking for description. The obdurate hearts of the Corcyreans were incapable of pity or remorse; but their relenting eyes could not bear the sight; and they commanded the bodies of their fellow-citizens, now breathless or expiring, to be thrown on carts, and conveyed without the walls.

The consequences of the sedition permanent.

Thus ended the sedition of Corcyra[10]; but its consequences were not soon to end. The contagion of that unhappy island engendered a political malady, which spread its baneful influence over Greece. The aristocratical, and still more, the popular governments of that country, had ever been liable to faction, which occasionally blazed into sedition. But this morbid tendency,

[10] Thucydid. p. 220—285.

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congenial to the constitution of republics, thenceforth assumed a more dangerous appearance, and betrayed more alarming symptoms. In every republic, and almost in every city, the intriguing and ambitious found the ready protection of Athens, or of Sparta, according as their selfish and guilty designs were screened under the pretence of maintaining the prerogatives of the nobles, or asserting the privileges of the people. A virtuous and moderate aristocracy, an equal impartial freedom, these were the colourings which served to justify violence and varnish guilt. Sheltered by the specious coverings of fair names, the prodigal assassin delivered himself from the importunity of his creditor. The father, with unnatural cruelty, punished the licentious extravagance of his son: the son avenged, by parricide, the stern severity of the father. The debates of the public assembly were decided by the sword. Not satisfied with victory, men thirsted for blood. This general disorder overwhelmed laws human and divine. The ordinary course of events was reversed: sentiments lost their natural force, and words their usual meaning.[11] Dulness and stupidity triumphed over abilities and refinement; for while the crafty and ingenious were laying fine-spun snares for their enemies, men of blunter minds had immediate recourse to the sword and poignard. This successful audacity was termed manly enterprise; ferocity assumed the name of courage; faction and ambition passed for patriotism and magna-

[11] Thucydid, p. 227. & seq.

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nimity; perfidy was called prudence; cunning, wisdom; every vice was clothed in the garb of every virtue: while justice, and moderation, and candour, were branded as weakness, cowardice, meanness of soul, and indifference to the public interest. Such was the perversion of sentiment, and such the corruption of language first engendered amidst the turbulence of Grecian factions, and too faithfully imitated, as far as the soft effeminacy of modern manners will permit, by the discontented and seditious of later times.—Wretched and detestable delusions, by which wicked men deceive and ruin the public and themselves!

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CHAP. XVII.

Physical Calamities conspire with the Evils of War.— Athenian Expedition into Ætolia.— Victories of Demosthenes.— He fortifies Pylus.— Blocks up the Spartans in Sphacteria.— The Spartans solicit Peace.— Artifices and Imprudence of Cleon.— His unmerited Success.— Ridiculed by Aristophanes.— Athenian Conquests.— Battle of Delium.— Commotions in Thrace.— Expedition of Brasidas.— Truce for a Year.— The War renewed.— Battle of Amphipolis.— Peace of Nicias.— Discontent of the Spartan Allies.

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Physical calamities conspire with the evils of war. Olymp. lxxxviii. 2. A. C. 427.

It would be agreeable to diversify the dark and melancholy scenes of the Peloponnesian war, by introducing occurrences and transactions of a different and more pleasing kind. But such, unfortunately, is the settled gloom of our present subject, that the episodes commonly reflect the same colour with the principal action. The miserable period now under our review, and already distinguished by revolt and sedition, was still farther deformed by a return of the pestilence, and by repeated earthquakes. The disease carried off five thousand Athenian troops, and a great but uncertain number of other citizens. It raged during a twelvemonth, with unabating violence; many remedies were employed, but all equally ineffectual. The poison at length spent its force, and the malady disappeared by

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a slow and insensible progress, similar to that observed in the Levant, and other parts of the world, which are still liable to be visited by this dreadful calamity.[1] The earthquakes alarmed Attica and Bœotia, but proved most destructive in the neighbouring isles. The dreadful concussions of the land were accompanied, or perhaps produced, by a violent agitation of the sea. The reflux of the waves overwhelmed the flourishing city of Orobia, on the western coast of Eubœa. Similar disasters happened in the small islands of Atalanta and Peperathus. Nor did these alarming events terminate the afflictions of the Greeks; for Nature, as if she had delighted to produce at one period every thing most awful, poured forth a torrent of fire from Mount Ætna, which demolished the industrious labours of the Cataneans A dreadful eruption had happened fifty years before this period; and the present was the third and most memorable, by which Sicily had been agitated and inflamed, since the coasts of that island were adorned by Grecian colonies.[2]

Olymp. lxxxviii. 3. A. C. 426.

If the Peloponnesian war had not been carried on with an animosity unexampled and unimitated in every age but the present, the long sufferings of the contending parties would have disposed them eagerly to desire the blessings of tranquillity. But such virulent passions rankled in Athens and Sparta, that while calamities were equally balanced, and the capitals of both republics were

Expedition of Demosthenes to Ætolia. Olymp. lxxxviii. 4. A. C. 425.

[1] Voyage de Tournefort, vol. ii. Discourse on the Plague, in the Phil. Trans. vol. lxiv.

[2] Thucydid. p. 250.

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secure, no combination of adverse circumstances seemed sufficient to determine either side to purchase peace by the smallest diminution of honour. Yet to this necessity, Sparta, in the following year, was reduced by a train of events, equally sudden and singular. Demosthenes, a general of merit and enterprise, commanded the Athenian forces at Naupactus. This town, as related above, had been bestowed on the unfortunate Messenians; by whose assistance, together with that of the Athenian allies in Acarnania, Cephallenia, and Zacynthus, Demosthenes undertook to reduce the hostile provinces of Ætolia, Ambracia, and Leucadia. But the operations necessary for this purpose were obstructed by the jealousies and dissension which prevailed among the confederates; each state insisting, that the whole force of the war should be immediately directed against its particular enemies.

Misunderstanding among the Athenian allies.

The allied army, thus distracted by contrariety, and weakened by defection, performed nothing decisive against Leucadia or Ambracia. In Ætolia they were extremely unfortunate. The Messenians, who were continually harassed by the natives of that barbarous province, persuaded Demosthenes that it would be easy to over-run their country, before the inhabitants, who lived in scattered villages, widely separated from each other, could collect their force, or attempt resistance. In pursuance of this advice, Demosthenes entered Ætolia, took and plundered the towns, and drove the inhabitants before him. During several days he marched unresisted; but having

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proceeded to Ægitium, the principal, or rather only city in the province, he found that his design had by no means escaped the notice of the enemy. Ægitium is situate among lofty mountains, and about ten miles distant from the Corinthian gulf. Among these intricate and almost inaccessible heights, the flower of the Ætolian nation was posted. Even the most distant tribes had come up, before the confederate army entered their borders.

Singular mode of battle.

Ægitium was stormed; but the inhabitants escaped to their countrymen concealed among the mountains. While the Athenians and their allies pursued them, the Ætolians rushed in separate bodies, from different eminences, and checked the pursuers with their darts and javelins. Having discharged their missile weapons, they retired, being light-armed, and incapable of resisting the impression of pikemen. New detachments continually poured forth from the mountains, and in all directions annoyed the confederates. The latter lost no ground, as long as their archers had darts, and were able to use them. But when the greatest part of their light troops were wounded or slain, the heavy-armed men began to give way. They still, however, maintained their order; and the battle long continued, in alternate pursuits and retreats, the Ætolians always flying before the enemy as soon as they had discharged their javelins. But at length the confederates were exhausted by so many repeated charges, and totally defeated by opponents who durst not wait their approach.

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Unfortunate issue of the expedition.

Their conductors through this intricate country had all perished. They mistook their road to the sea. The enemy were light-armed and in their own territories. The pursuit, therefore, was unusually destructive. Many fell into caverns, or tumbled headlong from precipices. A large party wandered into an impervious wood, which being set on fire by the enemy, consumed them in its flames. A miserable remnant returned to Naupactus afflicted by the loss of their companions, and highly mortified at being defeated by Barbarians, alike ignorant of the rules of war, and of the laws of civil society, who spoke an unknown dialect, and fed on raw flesh. [3]

Demosthenes defends Naupactus, &c.

This disaster deterred Demosthenes from returning to Athens, till fortune gave him an opportunity to retrieve the honour of his arms. The Ætolians and Ambraciots, the most formidable enemies of the republic on that western coast of Greece, solicited and obtained assistance from Lacedæmon and Corinth, vigorously attacked the towns of Naupactus and Amphilochian Argos, and threatened to reduce the whole province of Acarnania, in which the latter was situated. The vigilance and activity of Demosthenes not only saved these important cities, but obtained the most signal advantages over the assailants. With profound military skill he divided the strength of the enemy, and, by a well-conducted stratagem, totally defeated the Ambraciots among the heights of Idomené. A strong detachment of Ambraciots had advanced the preceding day to

Defeats the Ætolians and Ambraciots.

[3] Thucydid. p. 237. & seq.

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Olpæ, a place fortified by the Acarnanians, and the seat of their courts of justice. Demosthenes obliged this detachment to retreat with considerable loss, and intercepted its return homeward. Meanwhile the collected force of the Ambraciots marched to its support, being totally unacquainted with its misfortune. Apprised of this design, Demosthenes beset the passes, and seized the most advantageous posts on their route. With the remainder of his force he advanced to attack them in front. They had already proceeded to Idomené, and encamped on the lowest ridge of that mountain.[4]

Surprises their camp.

Demosthenes placed his Messenians in the van, and commanded them, as they marched along, to discourse in their Doric dialect. This circumstance, as the morning was yet in its dawn, effectually prevented the advanced guards from suspecting them to be enemies. Demosthenes then rushed forward with the Messenians and Acarnanians. The Ambraciots were yet in their beds. The camp was no sooner assaulted than the rout began. Many were slain on the spot; the rest fled amain; but the passes were beset, and the pursuers light-armed. Some ran to the sea, and beheld a new object of terror, a line of Athenian ships then cruising on the coast. Amidst this complication of calamities, they plunged into the water, and swam to the hostile squadron, choosing to be destroyed rather by the Athenians, than by the enemies from whom they had just separated.

[4] Thucydid. p. 244. & seq.

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Consternation of an Ambracian herald.

On the following day, the victors, who remained at Idomené, stripping the dead, and erecting their arms into a trophy, were addressed by a herald sent on the part of the detachment who had so much suffered in its retreat from Olpæ. This herald knew nothing of the fresh disaster that had befallen his countrymen. Observing the arms of the Ambraciots, he was astonished at their number. The victors perceiving his surprise, asked him, before he explained his commission, "What he judged to be the amount of the slain?" "Not more than two hundred," replied the herald. The inquirer then said, "It should seem otherwise, for there are the arms of more than a thousand men." The herald rejoined, "They cannot then belong to our party." The other replied, "They must, if you fought yesterday at Idomené." "We fought no where yesterday; we suffered the day before, in our retreat from Olpæ." "But *we* fought yesterday against these Ambraciots, who were marching to your relief." When the herald heard this, he utterred a deep groan, and departed abruptly, without further explaining his commission.[5]

Demosthenes sails to the Peloponnesus. Olymp. lxxxviii. 4. A. C. 425.

These important successes enabled Demosthenes to return with honour to Athens. The term of his military command had expired; but his mind could not brook inactivity. He therefore solicited permission to accompany, as a volunteer, the armament which sailed to Corcyra, the success of which has already been related, with leave to employ the Messenians, whom he

[5] Thucydid. p. 244. & seq.

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carried along with him, on the coast of Peloponnesus, should any opportunity occur there, for promoting the public service. While the fleet slowly coasted along the southern shores of that peninsula, the Messenians viewed, with mingled joy and sorrow, the long lost, but still beloved, seats of their ancestors. They regretted, in particular, the decay of ancient Pylus, the royal residence of their admired Nestor, whose youth had been adorned by valour, and his age renowned for wisdom. Their immortal resentment against Sparta was inflamed by beholding the ruins of Messené. A thousand ideas and sentiments, which time had nearly obliterated, revived at the sight of their native shores.

Emotions of the Messenians at the sight of their native shores.

When the tumult of their emotions subsided, they explained their feelings to Demosthenes, and to each other. He suggested, or at least warmly approved, the design of landing, and rebuilding Pylus, which had been abandoned by the Spartans, though it enjoyed a convenient harbour, and was strongly fortified by nature. Demosthenes proposed this measure to Eurymedon and Sophocles, who answered him with the insolence congenial to their character, "That there were many barren capes on the coast of Peloponnesus, which *those* might fortify who wished to entail an useless expence on their country." He next applied to the several captains of the fleet, and even to the inferior officers, but without better success, although he assured them that the place abounded in wood and stone, with which a wall, sufficient for defence, might speedily be completed. He

The Athenians and Messenians fortify Pylus.

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had desisted from farther entreaties, when a fortunate storm drove the whole fleet towards the Pylian harbour. This circumstance enabled him to renew his instances with greater force, alleging that the events of fortune confirmed the expediency of the undertaking. At length the sailors and soldiers, weary of idleness (for the weather prevented them from putting to sea), began the work of their own accord, and carried it on with such vigour and activity, that in six days the place was strongly fortified on every side.[6] The Athenian fleet then proceeded to Corcyra, Demosthenes retaining only five ships to guard this new acquisition.

The Spartans attempt to dislodge them.

The Spartans were no sooner informed of this daring measure, than they withdrew their army from its annual incursion into Attica, and recalled their fleet from Corcyra. The citizens, residing at home, immediately flew to arms, and marched towards Pylus, which was only fifty miles distant from their capital. They found the new fortress so well prepared for defence, that nothing could be undertaken against it with any prospect of success, until their whole forces had assembled. This occasioned but a short delay; after which Pylus was vigorously assaulted by sea and land. The walls were weakest towards the harbour; the entrance of which, however, was so narrow, that only two ships could sail into it abreast. Here the attack was most furious, and the resistance most obstinate.

[6] Thucydid. p. 256. & seq.

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Demosthenes encouraged his troops by his voice and arm. The gallant Brasidas, a man destined to act such an illustrious part in the following scenes of the war, called out to the Lacedæmonian pilots to drive against the beach; and exhorted them, by the destruction of their ships, to save the honour of their country. He farther recommended this boldness by his example, but in performing it, received a wound which rendered him insensible. His body dropped into the sea, seemingly deprived of life, but was recovered by the affectionate zeal of his attendants. When his senses returned, he perceived the loss of his shield, a matter highly punishable by the Spartan laws, if the shield of Brasidas had not been lost with more glory than ever shield was defended.[7]

Gallantry of Brasidas.

During three days, Demosthenes, with very unequal strength, resisted the enemy; when the approach of the Athenian fleet from Corcyra, which he had apprised of his danger, terminated the incredible labours of his exhausted garrison. A naval engagement ensued, in which the Lacedæmonians were defeated. But neither this defeat, nor the loss of five ships, nor the total dispersion of their fleet, nor the unexpected relief of Pylus, gave them so much uneasiness, as an event principally occasioned by their own imprudence. The island Sphacteria, scarce two miles in circumference, barren, woody, and uninhabited, lies before the harbour of Pylus. In this island the Spartans had posted four hundred and twenty heavy-armed

About four hundred Spartans blocked up in Sphacteria.

[7] Thucydid. p. 258.

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men, with a much greater proportion of Helots, not reflecting that the Athenians, as soon as they had resumed the command of the neighbouring sea, must have these forces at their devotion. This circumstance occurred not to the Spartans till after their defeat; and then affected them the more deeply, because the troops blocked up in the island belonged to the first families of the republic.

Consternation in Sparta.

Advice of this misfortune was immediately sent to the capital. The annual magistrates, attended by a deputation of the senate, hastened to examine matters on the spot. The evil appeared to be incapable of remedy; and of such importance was this body of Spartans to the community, that all present agreed in the necessity of soliciting a truce, until ambassadors were sent to Athens to treat of a general peace. The Athenians granted a suspension of hostilities, on condition that the Spartans, as a pledge of their sincerity, surrendered their whole fleet (consisting of about sixty vessels) into the harbour of Pylus. Even this mortifying proposal was accepted. Twenty days were consumed in the embassy; during which time the troops intercepted in Sphacteria were supplied with a stated proportion of meal, meat, and wine [8], that of the freemen amounting to double the quantity allowed to the slaves.

[8] Thucydides does not ascertain the quantity of meat. He says, two chœnixes of meal, and two cotyls of wine; that is, two pints of meal, and one pint of wine, English measure, a very small allowance; but the Athenians were afraid lest the besieged might hoard their provisions, if allowed more for daily support; which, if the negociation failed, might enable them long to hold out the place.

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The Spartans solicit peace.

When the Spartan ambassadors were admitted to an audience at Athens, they artfully apologized for the intended length of their discourses. In all their transactions with the Greeks, they had hitherto affected the dignified brevity [9] inspired by conscious pre-eminence: "Yet on the present occasion, they allowed that it was necessary to explain, copiously and clearly, the advantages which would result to all Greece, and particularly to Athens herself, if the latter accepted the treaty and alliance, the free gifts of unfeigned friendship, spontaneously offered by Sparta. They pretended not to conceal or extenuate the greatness of their misfortune; but the Athenians ought also to remember the vicissitudes of war. It was full time to embrace a hearty reconcilement, and to terminate the calamities of their common country. Hitherto the war had been carried on with more emulation than hatred; neither party had been reduced to extremity, nor had any incurable evil been yet inflicted or suffered. Terms of agreement, if accepted in the moment of victory, would redound to the glory of Athens; if rejected, would ascertain who were the real authors of the war, and to whom the public calamities ought thenceforth to be imputed; since it was well known, that if Athens and Sparta were unanimous, no power in Greece would venture to dispute their commands." [10]

[9] Imperatoria brevitas. TACITUS.
[10] Thucydid. p. 262. & seq.

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Arrogant demands of the Athenians.

The meek spirit of this discourse only discovered to the Athenians the full extent of their good fortune, of which they determined completely to avail themselves. Instigated by the violence of Cleon, they answered the ambassadors with great haughtiness; demanding, as preliminaries to the treaty, that the Spartans in Sphacteria should be sent to Athens; and that several places of great importance, belonging to the Spartans or their allies, should be delivered into their hands. These lofty pretensions, which were by no means justified by military success, appeared totally inadmissible to the ambassadors, who returned in disgust to the Spartan camp.

The negociation fruitless.

Nothing, it was evident, could be expected from the moderation of Athens; but it was expected from her justice, that she would restore the fleet, which had been surrendered as a pledge of the treaty. Even this was, on various pretences, denied.[11] Both parties, therefore, prepared for hostilities; the Athenians to maintain their arrogance, the Spartans to chastise it.

Obstinate defence of Sphacteria.

The former employed the operation of famine, as the readiest and least dangerous mode of reducing the soldiers in Sphacteria. The Athenian fleet, now greatly augmented, carefully guarded the island night and day. But notwithstanding its utmost vigilance, small vessels availed themselves of storms and darkness to throw provisions

[11] The Athenians objected, "an incursion towards their fortress, during the suspension of hostilities, και αλλα ουκ αξιολογα," and other matters of little moment, says Thucydides, with his usual impartiality, p. 266.

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into the place; a service undertaken by slaves from the promise of liberty; and by freemen, from the prospect of great pecuniary rewards. The Athenians redoubled their diligence, and often intercepted those victuallers; but they found it more difficult to interrupt the expert divers, who plunging deep under water, dragged after them bottles of leather, filled with honey and flour. The blockade was thus fruitlessly protracted several weeks. Demosthenes was averse to attack an island difficult of access, covered with wood, destitute of roads, and defended on the side of Pylus by a natural fortification, strengthened by art. Meanwhile the Athenians began to suffer inconveniences in their turn. Their garrison in Pylus was closely pressed by the enemy; there was but one source of fresh water, and that scanty, in the place; provisions grew scarce; the barrenness of the neighbouring coast afforded no supply: while they besieged the Spartans, they themselves experienced the hardships of a siege. CHAP. XVII.

Their situation, when reported at Athens, threw the assembly into commotion: many clamoured against Demosthenes; several accused Cleon. The artful demagogue, whose opposition had chiefly prevented an advantageous peace with Sparta, affected to disbelieve the intelligence, and advised sending men of approved confidence to Pylus, in order to detect the imposture. The populace cried aloud, "that Cleon himself should undertake this commission." But the dissembler dreaded to become the dupe of

Artifices and impudence of Cleon.

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his own artifice. He perceived, that if he went to Pylus, he must, at his return, either acknowledge the truth of the report, and thus be subjected to immediate shame, or fabricate false intelligence, and thus be exposed to future punishment. He therefore eluded his own proposal, by declaring, "that it ill became the dignity of Athens to stoop to a formal and tedious examination; and that, whatever were the state of the armament, if the commanders acted like men, they might take Sphacteria in a few days: that if *he* had the honour to be general, he would sail to the island with a small body of light infantry, and take it at the first onset."

Character of Nicias.

These sarcastic observations were chiefly directed against Nicias, one of the generals actually present in the assembly; a man of virtuous, but timid disposition: endowed with much prudence, and little enterprise; possessed of moderate abilities, and immoderate riches; a zealous partizan of aristocracy, and an avowed enemy to Cleon, whom he regarded as the worst enemy of his country.

He cedes the command to Cleon.

A person of this character could not be much inclined to engage in the hazardous expedition to Sphacteria. When the Athenians, with the usual licentiousness that prevailed in their assemblies, called out to Cleon, "that if the enterprise appeared so easy, it would better suit the extent of his abilities;" Nicias rose up, and immediately offered to cede to him the command. Cleon at first accepted it, thinking Nicias's proposal merely a feint; but when the latter ap-

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peared in earnest, his adversary drew back, alleging, "that Nicias, not Cleon, was general." The Athenians, with the malicious pleasantry natural to the multitude, pressed Cleon the closer, the more eagerly he receded. He was at length overcome by their importunity, but not forsaken by his impudence.[12] Advancing to the middle of the assembly, he declared, "that he was not afraid of the Lacedæmonians; and engaged, in twenty days, to bring the Spartans as prisoners to Athens, or to die in the[13] attempt." This heroical language excited laughter among the multitude; the wise rejoiced in thinking, that they must obtain one of two advantages, either the destruction of a turbulent demagogue (which they rather hoped), or the capture of the Spartans in Sphacteria.

Boastful promise of the latter;

The latter event was hastened by an accident: while some soldiers were preparing their victuals, the wood was set on fire, and long burned unperceived, till a brisk gale arising, the conflagration raged with such violence, as threatened to consume the island. This unforeseen disaster disclosed the strength and position of the Spartans; and Demosthenes was actually preparing to attack them, when Cleon, with his light-armed troops, arrived in the camp. The island was invaded in the night; the advanced guards were taken or slain. At dawn, the Athenians made

which is performed by accident. Olymp. lxxxviii. 4. A. C. 425.

[12] Thucydid. p. 271.

[13] Η αυτου αποκτειναι, or, "kill them on the spot." A little alteration in the text will give the meaning, which I preferred as most agreeable, to what follows: but the other translation better suits the boastful character of Cleon.

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a descent from seventy ships. The main body of the enemy retired to the strong post opposite to Pylus, harassed in their march by showers of arrows, stones, and darts, involved in the ashes of the burnt wood, which mounting widely into the air, on all sides, intercepted their sight, and increased the gloom of battle. The Spartans, closely embodied, and presenting a dreadful front to the assailants, made good their retreat. Having occupied the destined post, they boldly defended it wherever the enemy approached, for the nature of the ground hindered it from being surrounded. The Athenians used their utmost efforts to repel and overcome them; and during the greatest part of the day, both parties obstinately persevered in their purpose, under the painful pressures of fatigue, thirst, and a burning sun. At length the Messenians, whose ardour had been signally distinguished in every part of this enterprise, discovered an unknown path leading to the eminence which defended the Lacedæmonian rear. The Spartans were thus encompassed on all sides, and reduced to a similar situation to that of their illustrious countrymen who fell at Thermopylæ.

The Spartans in Sphacteria carried prisoners to Athens.

Their commanders disgraced not the country of Leonidas. Their general, Epitades, was slain. Hippagretes was dying of his wounds. Styphon, the third in command, still exhorted them to persevere. But Demosthenes and Cleon, desirous rather to carry them prisoners to Athens, than to put them to death, invited them, by the loud proclamation of a herald, to lay down their arms.

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The greater part dropped their shields, and waved their hands, in token of compliance. A conference followed between Demosthenes and Cleon on one side, and Styphon on the other. Styphon desired leave to send over to the Lacedæmonians on the continent for advice. Several messages passed between them; in the last of which it was said, "the Lacedæmonians permit you to consult your own interest, provided you submit to nothing base:" in consequence of which determination, they surrendered their arms and their persons. They were conducted to Athens, within the time assigned by Cleon; having held out fifty-two days after the expiration of the truce, during which time they had been so sparing of the provisions conveyed to them by the extraordinary means above mentioned, that, when the place was taken, they had still something in reserve. [14]

Humiliation of Sparta.

The Athenians withdrew their fleet, leaving a strong garrison in Pylus, which was soon reinforced by an enterprising body of Messenians from Naupactus. The Messenians, though possessed of no more than one barren cape on their native and once happy coast, resumed their inveterate hatred against Sparta, whose territories they continually infested by incursions, or harassed by alarms. This species of war, destructive in itself, was rendered still more dangerous by the revolts of the Helots, attracted by every motive of affection towards their ancient kinsmen, and animated by every principle of re-

[14] Thucydid. p. 271—279.

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sentment against their tyrannical masters. Meanwhile the Athenian fleet renewed and multiplied its ravages on the coast of Peloponnesus. Reduced to extremity by such proceedings, the Spartans sent to Athens repeated overtures of accommodation. But the good fortune of the Athenians only fomented their ambition. At the instigation of Cleon, they dismissed the Spartan ambassadors more insolently than ever.[15] Such was their deference to the opinion of this arrogant demagogue; at the same time that, with the most inconsistent levity, they listened with pleasure to the plays of Aristophanes, which lashed the character and administration of Cleon with the boldest severity of satire, sharpened by the edge of the most poignant ridicule.

Authority and insolence of Cleon.

Exposed by Aristophanes.

The taking of Pylus, the triumphant return of Cleon, a notorious coward transformed by the caprice of fortune into a brave and successful commander, were topics well suiting the comic vein of Aristophanes. The imperious demagogue had deserved the personal resentment of the poet, by denying the legitimacy of his birth[16], and thereby contesting his title to vote in the assembly. On former occasions, Aristophanes had stigmatised the incapacity and insolence of Cleon, together with his perfidious selfishness in embroiling the affairs of the republic. In the comedy[17] first represented in the seventh year of the war, he attacks him in the moment of victory, when fortune had rendered him the idol of a licentious

[15] Aristoph. Equit. v. 794.

[16] Vit. anonym. Aristoph.

[17] The *Ivrees*.

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multitude, when no comedian was so daring as to play his character, and no painter so bold as to design his mask. [18]

Account of his comedy, entitled the Knights.

Aristophanes, therefore, appeared for the first time on the stage, only disguising his own face, the better to represent the part of Cleon. In this ludicrous piece, which seems to have been celebrated even beyond its merit, the people of Athens are described under the allegory of a capricious old dotard, whose credulity, abused by a malicious slave lately admitted into his house [19], persecutes and torments his faithful old servants. Demosthenes bitterly complains, that, intending to gratify the palate of the old man, he had brought a delicate morsel from Pylus; but that it had been stolen by Cleon, and by him served up to their common master. After lamenting, with his companion Nicias, the hardships of their condition, they hold counsel together, and contrive various expedients for putting an end to their common calamities. The desponding Nicias proposes drinking bull's blood, after the example of Themistocles; Demosthenes, with more courage, advises a hearty draught of wine. Finding Cleon asleep, they seize the opportunity not only to purloin this liquor, but to rifle his pockets, in which they discover some ancient oracles, typically representing the succession of Athenian magistrates. Towards the end of the prophecy, it was said, that the dragon should overcome the

[18] Τῳ του δεους γαρ αυτον ουδεις ηθελε
Των σκευοποιων εικασαι. Equites, v. 231.

[19] Νεοϊητον κακον, "the new-bought mischief."

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devouring vulture. The rapacious avarice of Cleon corresponded to the type of the vulture; and the dragon darkly shadowed out Agoracritus, an eminent maker of puddings and sausages, the shape and contents of which alluded to the figure and food of that terrible serpent. Nicias and Demosthenes hail this favourite of fortune, as the destined master of the republic. Agoracritus alleges in vain, that he is totally unacquainted with political affairs, ignorant of every liberal art, and has hardly learned to read. They reply, by announcing to him the oracle, and by proving that his pretended imperfections better qualified him to conduct the government of Athens. This office required none of the talents, the want of which he lamented. He matched Cleon in impudence, and surpassed him in strength of lungs. His profession had taught him to squeeze, to amass, to mix, to bruise, and to embroil; and long experience had rendered him accomplished in all the frauds and chicane of the market.[20] He might therefore boldly enter the lists with Cleon, being assured of assistance from the whole body of Athenian knights.[21] Agoracritus, thus encouraged, prepares for encountering his adversary. The contest, long doubtful, is maintained in a style of the lowest buffoonery, always ludicrous, often indecent. The old dotard, or rather the Athenians whom he represents, finally acknow-

[20] The same word in Greek denotes the market and the forum. Indeed the same place usually served for both.

[21] The ἱππεῖς, or Equites, the second rank of citizens at Athens, who detested Cleon, and from whom the play takes its name.

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ledge their past errors; and regret being so long deceived by an upstart slave, through whose obstinacy in continuing the war, they had been cooped up within the walls of an unwholesome city, and hindered from enjoying their beautiful fields and happy rural amusements. Agoracritus seizes this favourable moment to produce two ancient treaties with the Lacedæmonians, personified by two beautiful women, whom he had found closely mewed up in the house of Cleon. Of these females the old Athenian becomes suddenly enamoured, and they retire together to the country.

The Athenians take Cythera. Olymp. lxxxix. 1. A. C. 424.

The people of Athens permitted, and even approved, the licentious boldness of Aristophanes; but neither the strength of reason, nor the sharpness of satire, could check the dangerous career of their ambition. The war was rendered popular by success; they prepared for carrying it on with redoubled vigour. The first operations of the ensuing summer gratified their utmost hopes. The principal division of the fleet, conducted by the prudence of Nicias, conquered the fertile and populous island of Cythera, stretching from the southern promontory of Laconia towards the Cretan sea, and long enriched by the commerce of Egypt and Libya. The Lacedæmonian garrison, as well as the Spartan magistrates in the island, surrendered prisoners of war. The more dangerous part of the inhabitants were removed to the Athenian isles; the remainder were subjected to an annual tribute amounting in value to eight hundred pounds sterling; an Athenian garrison took possession of the fortress.

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Reduce Nicæa, and ravage Peloponnesus.

Soon after this conquest, the arms of Demosthenes and Hippocrates reduced the town of Nicæa, the principal sea-port of the Megareans; and the Athenian fleet ravaged with impunity several maritime cities on the eastern coast of Peloponnesus. Thyrea was condemned to a harder fate. This city, together with the surrounding district, had been granted, by the compassion of Sparta, to the miserable natives of Ægina, who (as above mentioned) had been driven from their once powerful island by the cruelty of Athens. The same cruelty still continued to pursue them. Their newly-raised walls were taken by assault; their houses burned; and the inhabitants, without distinction, put to the sword.

Endeavour to produce a revolution in Bœotia.

Hitherto all the enterprises of the Athenians were crowned with success. Fortune first deserted them in Bœotia. During several months their generals, Demosthenes and Hippocrates, availing themselves of the political factions of that country, had been carrying on secret intrigues with Chæronæa, Sipæ, and Orchomenus, places abounding in declared partizans of democracy, and eternally hostile to the ambition of Thebes. The insurgents had agreed to take arms, in order to betray the western parts of Bœotia to Demosthenes, who sailed with forty gallies from Naupactus; while Hippocrates, at the head of seven thousand heavy-armed Athenians, and a much greater proportion of light-armed auxiliaries, invaded the eastern frontier of that province. It was expected, that before the Thebans could bring a sufficient force into the

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field, the invaders and insurgents, advancing from opposite extremities of the country, might unite in the centre, and perhaps subdue Thebes itself, the most powerful, as well as most zealous, ally of Sparta.

Their plan too complicated for execution.

This plan, though concerted with much ability, was found too complicated for execution. Demosthenes steered towards Siphæ, before his coadjutor was ready to take the field; some mistake, it is said, having happened about the time appointed for action; and the whole contrivance was betrayed by Nicomachus, a Phocian, to the Spartans, and by them communicated to the Bœotians. The cities which meditated revolt were thus secured, before Demosthenes appeared at Siphæ, and before Hippocrates had even marched from Attica.

They are defeated in the battle of Delium. Olymp. lxxxix. 1. A. C. 424.

The latter at length entered the eastern frontier of Bœotia; and, as the principal design had miscarried, contented himself with taking and fortifying Delium, a place sacred to Apollo. Having garrisoned this post, he prepared for returning home. But while his army still lay in the neighbourhood of Delium, the Thebans, encouraged by Pagondas, a brave and skilful leader, marched with great rapidity from Tanagra, in order to intercept his retreat. Their forces amounted to eighteen thousand; the Athenians were little less numerous. An engagement ensued, which national emulation rendered bloody and obstinate. Before the battle, Pagondas had detached a small squadron of horse, with orders to advance suddenly, as soon as the action had

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commenced. This stratagem was decisive. The Athenians, terrified at the sight of a reinforcement, which their fears magnified into a new army, were thrown into disorder, and put to flight. Approaching darkness saved them from total destruction. They escaped disgracefully into Attica, after leaving in the field of battle a thousand pikemen, with their commander Hippocrates.

The Thebans take Delium by means of a machine invented for that purpose.

The victorious army immediately formed the siege of Delium, which was taken by means of an engine first contrived for that purpose. Several parts of the fortification, which had been raised in great haste, consisted chiefly of wood. The besiegers therefore, joining together a number of large beams, formed a huge mast, perforated in the middle; to one of its extremities they appended a prodigious mass of pitch and sulphur; and to the other a bellows, which, when this unusual instrument of destruction was raised above the wooden rampart, immediately threw the whole into flames. The Athenian garrison, diminished by death or desertion to two hundred men, surrendered prisoners of war. [22]

Commotions in Thrace.

The Athenians had scarcely time to lament their losses in Bœotia, when they received intelligence of events in another quarter, equally unexpected, but far more distressful. These events are the more remarkable, because they naturally arose out of the preceding prosperity of Athens, and the past misfortunes of Sparta. The uninterrupted train of success which attended the

[22] Thucydid. p. 304—320.

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arms of Nicias and Demosthenes in the eighth year of the war, alarmed the citizens of Olynthus and other places of the Chalcidicé, which having embraced the earliest opportunity of revolting from the Athenians, justly dreaded the vengeance of an incensed and victorious people. Every southerly wind threatened them with the approach of an Athenian fleet. Their apprehensions were not less painful on the side of Thessaly. The slightest movement in that country terrified them with the apprehensions of an Athenian army, which, victorious in the south, should advance to punish its northern enemies. But as none of these fearful suspicions were realised, the inhabitants of the Chalcidicé gradually resumed courage, put their towns in a posture of defence, and craved assistance from their Peloponnesian allies. At the same time Perdiccas, king of Macedon, who regarded the Athenians as his ancient and natural enemies, and the rapacious invaders of his coast, sent money into the south of Greece, for the purpose of hiring soldiers, whom he intended to employ in resisting the encroachments of that ambitious people, as well as in subduing the Elymeans, Lyncestæ, and other barbarous tribes, not yet incorporated in the Macedonian kingdom.

Fomented by the Spartans.

Such were the enemies, whose activity the good fortune of Athens had roused: while the calamities of Sparta prompted her to supply the reinforcement of troops, which both Perdiccas and the Chalcidians demanded. During the seventh and eighth years of the war, that republic

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fatally experienced the truth of Pericles's maxim, "that those who command the sea, may also become masters at land." The Athenian fleets domineered over the coast of Peloponnesus. It was impossible to foresee what places would be the next objects of their continual descents. The maritime parts were successively laid waste, and finally abandoned by the inhabitants, who found resistance ineffectual and useless. These misfortunes were increased by the frequent desertion of the Helots to the neighbouring garrisons in Pylus and Cythera, and by the dread of a general insurrection among those numerous and unhappy victims of Spartan tyranny. To prevent this evil, the Spartans had recourse to such expedients as excite astonishment and horror. They commanded the Helots to choose two thousand of their bravest and most meritorious youths, who, by the general consent of their companions, deserved the crown of liberty; and when invested with this perfidious ornament, the unsuspecting freemen had paraded the streets, and sacrificed in the temples, exulting in their recent emancipation, these new members of the community gradually disappeared from the sight of men, nor was it ever known by what means they had been destroyed. But the veil of mystery, which concealed that dark and bloody stratagem, prevented neither the resentment of the slaves, nor the just suspicion of their masters. The latter were eager to embrace any measure that might deliver their country from its dangerous domestic foes. With much satisfaction,

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therefore, they sent seven hundred Helots to the standard of Brasidas, whose merit had recommended him to Perdiccas and the Chalcidians, as the general best qualified to manage the Macedonian war. About a thousand soldiers were levied in the neighbouring cities of Peloponnesus. Several Spartans cheerfully accompanied a leader whom they admired. With this inconsiderable force Brasidas, towards the beginning of autumn, undertook an expedition highly important in its consequences, conducted with bold enterprise and consummate prudence.[23]

Brasidas's expedition to Thrace. Olymp. lxxxix. 1. A. C. 424.

Having traversed the friendly countries of Bœotia and Phocis, he arrived at the foot of Mount Oëta, and penetrated through the narrow defiles confined between that steep and woody range of hills, and the boisterous waves of the Malian gulf. The sight of Thermopylæ animated the enthusiasm of the Spartans, and encouraged them to force their way through the hostile plains of Thessaly; a country actually torn by domestic discord, but always friendly to the Athenians. The celerity of Brasidas anticipated the slow opposition of a divided enemy. Having reached the Macedonian town of Dium, he joined forces with Perdiccas, who proposed directing the first operations of the combined army against Arribæus, the king or leader of the barbarous Lyncestæ. But even this Barbarian knew the valour of the Spartans, and the equity of Brasidas. To the decision of the Grecian general he offered to submit the differences between Perdic-

[23] Thucydid. p. 304.

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cas and himself, and engaged to abide by the award, however unfavourable to his interest. The Spartan listened to a proposal extremely reasonable in itself, though altogether inconsistent with the ambitious views of Perdiccas, who disdained to accept as a judge the man whom he paid as an auxiliary. Brasidas, on the other hand, declined in firm, but decent terms, to employ his valour against those who implored his justice. The generals thus separated in mutual disgust; and Perdiccas thenceforth reduced his contribution of subsidy from a moiety to a third; but even that was extorted from his fears, not bestowed by his munificence.

His transactions with the Acanthians.

Brasidas hastened to join the Chalcidians, by whom he was received with a degree of joy suitable to the impatience with which he had been expected. Amidst the general defection of their neighbours, the towns of Acanthus and Stagirus still maintained their allegiance to Athens. Brasidas appeared before the gates of Acanthus, while the peaceful inhabitants were preparing for the labours of the vintage. He sent a messenger, craving leave to enter the place, and to address the assembly. The Acanthians were divided in opinion; but the majority, fearing to expose their ripe fields and vineyards to the resentment of his army, agreed to admit the general alone and unattended, and impartially to weigh whatever he proposed for their deliberation. Brasidas, though a Spartan, was an able speaker. He observed to the Acanthians, convened in full assembly, "That, in compliance

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with the generous resolution of Sparta, he had undertaken, and finally accomplished, a long and dangerous march, to deliver them from the tyranny of Athenian magistrates and garrisons, and to restore them, what the common oppressors of Greece had so long withheld, the independent government of their own equitable laws. This was the object, which, amidst all the calamities of war, the Spartans had ever kept in view; this was the system, which, before his departure from home, the principal magistrates had sworn unanimously to maintain. *That* freedom and independence, which formed the domestic happiness of Sparta, his countrymen were ambitious to communicate to all their allies. But if the Acanthians refused to share the general benefit, they must not complain of experiencing the unhappy effects of their obstinacy. The arms of Sparta would compel those whom her arguments had failed to persuade. Nor could this be blamed as injustice; first, because the resources with which the Acanthians furnished Athens, under the ignominious name of tribute, served to rivet the chains of Greece; and, secondly, because the example of a people, so wealthy and flourishing, and long renowned for their penetration and sagacity, might influence the resolutions of neighbouring states, and deter them from concurring with the measures necessary to promote the public welfare."

His merit and success.

This judicious discourse, enforced by the terror of the Spartan army, engaged the Acanthians to accept the friendship of Brasidas. Stagirus, an-

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other city on the Strymonic gulf, readily followed the example, and opened its gates to the deliverer. During the ensuing winter, the measures of the Spartan general were conducted with equal ability and enterprise. His successful operations against the inland towns facilitated the surrender of such places, as, by their maritime or insular situation, were most exposed to the vengeance of Athens, and therefore most averse to revolt. His moderate use of victory ensured the good-will of the vanquished. The various parts of a plan, thus artfully combined, mutually assisted each other; the success of one undertaking contributed to that of the next which followed it; and, at length, without any considerable miscarriage, he had rendered himself master of most places in the peninsula of Acta, Sithonia, and Pallené.

Amphipolis revolts to Brasidas,

The loss of Amphipolis was that which most deeply afflicted the Athenians, a rich and populous city, beautifully situate on a small but well cultivated island, surrounded by the river Strymon, the banks of which supplied excellent timber, and other materials of naval strength. By possessing this town, the Spartans now commanded both branches of the river, and might thus pass, without interruption, to the Athenian colonies, or subjects on the coast of Thrace; seize, or plunder the gold mines opposite to the isle of Thasos, and ravage the fertile fields of the Thracian Chersonesus. The conquest of a place so essential to the enemy, had exercised the courage, the eloquence, and the dexterity of

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Brasidas. He formed a conspiracy with the malecontents in the place, skilfully disposed his army before the walls, harangued the assembly of the people. A most seasonable promptitude distinguished all his measures; yet the Athenian Eucleus, who commanded the garrison, found time to send a vessel to Thasos, requesting immediate and effectual relief.

notwithstanding the activity of Thucydides the historian;

The Athenians had committed the government of that island, as well as the direction of the mines on the opposite continent, to the celebrated historian of a war, in which he was a meritorious, though unfortunate, actor. Without a moment's delay, Thucydides put to sea with seven gallies, and arrived in the mouth of the Strymon the same day on which his assistance had been demanded. But it was already too late to save Amphipolis.[24] The Spartan general, who had exact information of all the measures of the besieged, well knew the importance of anticipating the arrival of Thucydides, whose name was highly respected by the Greek colonies in Thrace, and whose influence was considerable among the native Barbarians. Brasidas, therefore, proposed such a capitulation to the Amphipolitans as it seemed imprudent to refuse. They were to be released from the tribute which they had hitherto paid the Athenians; to enjoy the utmost degree of political independence, not inconsistent with the alliance of Sparta; even the Athenian garrison, if they continued in the place, were to be entitled to all the rights of

[24] Thucydid. p. 322.

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citizens; and such persons as chose to leave it, were granted a reasonable time to remove their families and their property. The last condition was embraced by the Athenians, and their more determined partizans. They retired to the neighbouring town of Eion, situate near the sea, on the northern branch of the Strymon; a place secured against every hostile assault by the skill and activity of Thucydides.

which saves Eion.

Towards the end of winter, the full extent of Brasidas's success was made known at Athens. The assembly was in commotion; and the populace were the more enraged at their losses, as it now appeared so easy to have prevented them, either by guarding the narrow defiles which led to their Macedonian possessions, or by sending their fleet with a seasonable reinforcement to their feeble garrisons in those parts. Their own neglect had occasioned the public disgrace; but with the usual injustice and absurdity accompanying popular discontents, they exculpated themselves, and banished their generals. Thucydides was involved in this cruel sentence. An armament was sent to Macedon; and new commanders were named to oppose Brasidas.

Brasidas's success occasions clamours and impeachments in Athens.

But the designs of that commander, who had begun to build vessels on the Strymon, and aspired at nothing less than succeeding to the authority, without exercising the oppression, of Athens, over those extensive shores, were more successfully opposed by the envy of the Spartan magistrates. The pride of the nobles was wounded by the glory of an expedition, in which

The Spartans avail themselves of it to obtain a truce for a year.

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they had no share; and their selfishness, while it obstinately prevented the supplies necessary to complete the plan of Brasidas, was eager to reap the profit of his past success. The restoration of their kinsmen taken at Sphacteria formed the object of their fondest wish; and they expected that the Athenians might listen to a proposal for that purpose, in order to recover the places which they had lost, and to check the fortunate career of a prudent and enterprising general. The Athenians readily entered into these views: it was determined that matters of such importance should be discussed with leisure and impartiality; a truce was therefore agreed on for a year between the contending republics.

Olymp. lxxxix. 2. A. C. 423.

This transaction was concluded in the ninth summer of the war. It was totally unexpected by Brasidas, who received the voluntary submission of Scioné and Menda, two places of considerable importance in the peninsula of Pallené; of the former, indeed, before he was acquainted with the suspension of hostilities; but of the latter, even after he was apprised of that treaty.

The war renewed. Olymp. lxxxix. 3. A. C. 422.

While the active valour of Brasidas prevented the confirmation of peace, the conscious worthlessness of Cleon promoted the renewal, or rather the continuance, of war. The glory of Athens was the perpetual theme of his discourse. He exhorted his countrymen to punish the perfidy of Sparta, in abetting the insolent revolt of Menda and Scioné; and to employ his own skill and bravery, which had been so successfully exerted on the coast of Peloponnesus, to repair

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their declining fortune in Macedonia. The Athenians listened to the specious advice of this turbulent declaimer, who, in the ensuing spring, sailed to the Macedonian coast with a fleet of thirty gallies, twelve hundred citizens heavy-armed, a squadron of three hundred horse, and a powerful body of light-armed auxiliaries. The surrender of Menda and Torona, whose inhabitants were treated with every excess of cruelty, encouraged him to attack Amphipolis. With this design, having collected his forces at Eion, he waited the arrival of some Macedonian troops, promised by Perdiccas, who having quarrelled with the Spartan general, deceitfully flattered the hopes of his antagonist.

Battle of Amphipolis.

The army of Cleon contained the flower of the Athenian youth, whose ardent valour disdained a precarious dependence on Barbarian aid. They accused the cowardice of their leader, which was only equalled by his incapacity, and lamented their own hard fate in being subjected to the authority of a man so unworthy to command them. The impatient temper of an arrogant demagogue was ill fitted to endure these seditious complaints. He hastily led his troops before the place, without previously examining the strength of the walls, the situation of the ground, the number or disposition of the enemy. Brasidas, meanwhile, had taken proper measures to avail himself of the known imprudence of his adversary. A considerable body of men had been concealed in the woody mountain Cerdylium, which overhangs Amphipolis. The greater part of the army was drawn up ready for action, at the

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several gates of the city. Clearidas, who commanded there, had orders to rush forth at a given signal, while Brasidas, in person, conducting a select band of intrepid followers, watched the first opportunity for attack. The plan, contrived with so much skill, was executed with equal dexterity. Confounded with the rapidity and precision of such an unexpected and complicated charge, the enemy fled amain, abandoning their shields, and exposing their naked backs to the swords and spears of the pursuers. The forces on either side amounted to about three thousand; six hundred Athenians fell victims to the folly of Cleon, who, though foremost in the flight, was arrested by the hand of a Myrcinian targeteer.

Death of Cleon.

His death might appease the manes of his unfortunate countrymen; but nothing could alleviate the sorrow of the victors for the loss of their admired Brasidas, who received a mortal wound while he advanced to the attack. He was conveyed alive to Amphipolis, and consoled with the result of his last victory, in which only seven men had perished on the Spartan side. The solemn magnificence of his funeral was adorned by the splendour of military honours; but what was still more honourable to Brasidas, he was sincerely lamented by the grateful tears of numerous communities, who regarded his virtues and abilities as the surest pledges of their own freedom and happiness. The citizens of Amphipolis paid an extraordinary tribute to his memory. Having demolished every monument of their ancient worthies, they erected the statue

Death and honours of Brasidas.

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of Brasidas in the most conspicuous square of the city, appointed annual games to be celebrated at his tomb, and sacrificed to his revered shade, as to the great protecting hero and original founder of their community.[25]

Peace of Nicias. Olymp. lxxxix. 4. A. C. 421.

The battle of Amphipolis removed the principal obstacles to peace. There was not any Spartan general qualified to accomplish the designs of Brasidas. The Athenians, dejected by defeat, and humbled by disgrace, wanted the bold imposing eloquence of Cleon, to disguise their weakness, and varnish their misfortunes. With the disheartened remains of an enfeebled armament, they despaired of recovering their Macedonian possessions; and the greater part returned home, well disposed for an accommodation with the enemy. These dispositions were confirmed by the pacific temper of Nicias, who had succeeded to the influence of Cleon, and who fortunately experienced in the moderation of Pleistoanax, king of Sparta, a ready coadjutor in his measures. During winter, several friendly conferences were held between the commissioners of the two republics; and, towards the commencement of the ensuing spring, a treaty of peace, and soon afterwards a defensive alliance, for fifty years, was ratified by the kings and ephori of Sparta on the one side, and by the archons and generals of Athens on the other. In consequence of this negociation, which was intended to comprehend the respective allies of the contracting powers, all places and prisoners,

[25] Thucydid. p. 307.

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taken in the course of the war, were to be mutually restored: the revolted cities in Macedon were specified by name: but it was regulated that the Athenians should not exact from them any larger revenue than that formerly constituted by the justice of Aristides. [26]

Dissatisfaction of the Lacedæmonian allies.

In all their transactions, the Greeks were ever prodigal of promises, but backward in performance; and, amidst the continual rotation of authority, magistrates easily found excuses for violating the conditions granted by their predecessors. The known principles of republican inconstancy, ever ready to vibrate between excessive animosity and immoderate friendship, might likewise suggest a reason for converting a treaty of peace into a contract of alliance. But this measure, in the present case, was the effect of necessity. Athens and Sparta might make mutual restitution, because their respective interests required it. But no motive of interest engaged the former power to restore Nicæa to the Megareans, or the towns of Solium and Anactorium to Corinth. The Thebans, shortly before the peace, had seized the Athenian fortress of Panactum, situate on the frontier of Bœotia. They were still masters of Platæa. Elated by their signal victory at Delium, they could not be supposed willing to abandon their conquests, or even heartily inclined to peace. It was still less to be expected that the Macedonian cities should, for the conveniency of Sparta, submit to the

[26] Thucydid. p. 354. & seq.

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severe yoke of Athens, from which they had recently been delivered; nor could it be hoped that even the inferior states of Peloponnesus should tamely lay down their arms, without obtaining any of those advantages with which they had been long flattered by their Spartan allies.

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Discontents fomented by the Corinthians. — The Argive Alliance — To which Athens acceeds. — Birth and Education of Alcibiades. — His Friendship with Socrates. — His Character — and Views — which are favoured by the State of Greece. — He deceives the Spartan Ambassadors. — Renewal of the Peloponnesian War. — Battle of Mantinæa. — Tumults in Argos. — Massacre of the Scioneans. — Cruel Conquest of Melos.

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Discontents fomented by the Corinthians.

THE voluptuous, yet turbulent citizens of Corinth, enjoy the odious distinction of renewing a war which their intrigues and animosities had first kindled. Under pretence of having taken an oath never to abandon the Macedonian cities, they declined to become parties in the general treaty of peace. The alliance between Athens and Sparta, in which it was stipulated that these contracting powers should be entitled to make such alterations in the treaty as circumstances might require, the Corinthians affected, with some reason, to consider as a conspiracy against the common liberties of Greece.[1] Fired with this idea, they hastened to Argos, in order to animate that republic with the same passions which rankled in their own breasts. Having

[1] The clause was worded in such a manner as might naturally excite alarm; Προσθεινωσκαι αφελειν ὁτι αν ΑΜΦΟΙΝ τον ξυμμαχον δοκη. Thucydid. l. v. p. 482.

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roused the ambition of the *magistrates*, they artfully reminded the *people* of the glory of Agamemnon, recalled to the Argives their ancient and just pre-eminence in the Peloponnesus, and conjured them to maintain the honour of that illustrious peninsula, which had been so shamefully abandoned by the pusillanimity, or betrayed by the selfishness, of Sparta.

The Argive alliance. Olymp. lxxxix. 4. A. C. 421.

The Argives wanted neither power nor inclination to assume that important office. During the Peloponnesian war, they had observed the principles of a prudent neutrality, equally favourable to their populousness and their wealth. Their protection was courted by Mantinæa, the most powerful city in Arcadia, which had recently conquered some villages in its neighbourhood, to which Sparta laid claim. The Elians, long hostile to Sparta, eagerly promoted the Argive alliance, which was farther strengthened by the speedy accession of the Macedonian cities, whose inhabitants were not more flattered by the kind zeal of Corinth, than provoked by the cruel indifference of Sparta. Thebes and Megara were equally offended at the Lacedæmonians, and equally inclined to war. But a rigid aristocracy prevailed in those states, whose ambitious magistrates, trembling for their personal authority, and that of their families, declined entering into confederacy with free democratical republics.[2]

To which Athens accedes.

But this democratical association soon acquired an accession still more important, and received

[2] Thucydid. l. v. p. 371.

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into its bosom the fountain of liberty itself, even the republic of Athens. This extraordinary event happened in the year following the negociation between Athens and Sparta. It was effected by means extremely remote from the experience of modern times; means which it is incumbent on us to explain, lest the political transactions of Greece should appear too fluctuating and capricious to afford a proper subject for history.

Olymp. xc. 1. A. C. 430.

Amidst the factious turbulence of senates and assemblies, no measure could be adopted by one party, without being condemned by another. Many Athenians disapproved the peace of Nicias[3]; but the general blaze of opposition was eclipsed by the splendour of one man, who, on this occasion, first displayed those singular but unhappy talents, which proved fatal to himself and to his country. Alcibiades had not reached his thirtieth year, the age required by the wisdom of Solon for being entitled to speak in the assembly. But every advantageous circumstance of birth and fortune, talents natural and acquired, accomplishments of mind and body, pleaded an exception in favour of this extraordinary character, which, producing at once flowers and fruit, united with the blooming vivacity and youth, the ripened wisdom of experience.[4] His father, the rich and generous Clinias, derived his extraction from the

Birth and education of Alcibiades.

[3] The Greeks sometimes distinguished treaties by the names of those who made them: the peace of Cimon; the peace of Nicias; and, as we shall see hereafter, the peace of Antalcidas.

[4] Plut. & Nepos in Alcibiad.

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heroic Ajax, and had distinguished his own valour and patriotism in the glorious scenes of the Persian war. In the female line, the son of Clinias was allied to the eloquence and magnanimity of Pericles, who, as his nearest surviving kinsman, had been entrusted with the care of his minority. But the statesman, who governed with undivided sway the affairs of Athens and of Greece, could not bestow much attention on this important domestic task. The tender years of Alcibiades were committed to the illiberal discipline of mercenary preceptors; his youth and inexperience were beset by the destructive adulation of servile flatterers, until the young Athenian, having begun to relish the poems of Homer, the admiration of which is congenial to every great mind, learned from thence to despise the pedantry of the one, and to detest the meanness of the other.[a]

His early attachment to Socrates.

From Homer Alcibiades early imbibed that ambition for excellence which is the great lesson of the immortal bard. Having attained the verge of manhood, he readily distinguished, among the crowd of rhetoricians and sophists, the superior merit of Socrates, who, rejecting all factitious and abstruse studies, confined his speculations to matters of real importance and utility; who having never travelled into Egypt and the East in search of *mysterious* knowledge, reasoned with an Attic perspicuity and freedom; and who, being unbiassed by the system of any master, and always master of himself, thought, spoke, and acted with equal independence and dignity. An

[a] Plut. in Alcibiad.

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amiable and most instructive writer, the disciple and friend of Socrates, has left an admirable panegyric of the uniform temperance, the unshaken probity, the diffusive benevolence, invariably displayed in his virtuous life of seventy [6] years. His distinguishing excellencies are justly appreciated by Xenophon, a scholar worthy of his master [7]; but the youthful levity of Alcibiades (for youth is seldom capable of estimating the highest of all merits, the undeviating tenor of an innocent and useful life) was chiefly delighted with the splendour of particular actions. The eloquence, rather than the innocence of Socrates, excited his admiration. He was charmed with that inimitable raillery, that clear comprehensive logic, which baffled the most acute disputants of the Athenian schools [8]; that erect independence of mind, which disdained the insolence of power, the pride of wealth, and the vanity of popular fame, was well fitted to attract the congenial esteem of Alcibiades, who aspired beyond the beaten paths of vulgar greatness; nor could the gallant youth be less affected by the invincible intrepidity of Socrates, when, quitting the shade of speculation, and covered with the helm and cuirass, he grasped the massy spear, and justified, by his strenuous exertion in the field of battle, the useful lessons of his philosophy.[9]

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Socrates, in his turn, (since it is easier for a wise man to correct the errors of reason than to con-

Their mutual obligations and friendship.

[6] Xenoph. Memorabil. Socrat.

[7] See particularly Xenoph. Apolog. Socrat. [8] Plato, passim.

[9] Xenoph. Memorab. Socrat. pp. 449. 804. 818.

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quer the delusions of sentiment,) was deeply affected with the beauty of Alcibiades[10]; a beauty depending, not on the transient flower of youth, and the seductive delicacy of effeminate graces, but on the ineffable harmony of a form which realised the sublime conceptions of Homer and Phidias concerning their fabulous divinities, and which shone in the autumn of life with undiminished effulgence.[11] The affection of Socrates, though infinitely removed from impurity, resembled rather the ardour of love than the calm moderation of friendship. The sage, whose company was courted by his other disciples, himself courted the company of Alcibiades; and when the ungrateful youth sometimes escaped to his licentious companions, the philosopher pursued him with the eagerness of a father or master anxious to recover a fugitive son or much valued slave.[12] At the battle of Potidæa he saved the life of his pupil, and in order to gratify the love of military glory, which already animated his youthful bosom, the sage obtained for Alcibiades the prize of valour, which the universal consent of the Athenians thought due to himself. At the fatal engagement of Delium, Alcibiades, it is said, had an opportunity of returning the more substantial favour, by saving the precious life of Socrates[13];

[10] Vid. Xenoph. & Plato passim. Socrates often acknowledges the danger of beauty, and its power over himself; but loses no opportunity to caution his disciples against the shameful passions, and abominable vices, which flow from this fair source. Vid. Memorab. Socrat. l. ii. passim, & l. v. c. 3. Sympos. c. 4. p. 216.

[11] Plut. in Alcibiad. [12] Plut. ibid.

[13] Strabo, p. 330. & Plut. in Alcibiad.

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and it may well be supposed that an interchange of such important favours would straiten the bands of their mutual friendship, during which the powers of reason and fancy were directed, with unabating diligence, to improve the understanding, and excite the virtue of Alcibiades. CHAP. XVIII.

But this favourite youth laboured under a defect, which could not be compensated by the highest birth, the most splendid fortune, the noblest endowments of mind and body, and even the inestimable friendship of Socrates. He wanted an honest heart.[14] This we are warranted to affirm on the authority of contemporary writers, who acknowledge, that first admiration, and then interest, was the foundation of his attachment to the illustrious sage, by whose instruction he expected to become not a good, but an able, man. Some inclination to virtue he might, in such company, perhaps feel, but more probably feign; and the nicest discernment might mistake the real character of a man, who could adopt, at pleasure, the most opposite manners; and who, as will appear from the subsequent events of his various life, could surpass the splendid magnificence of Athens, or the rigid frugality of Sparta; could conform, as interest required, to the laborious exercises of the Thebans, or to the voluptuous indolence of Ionia; assume the soft effeminacy of an Eastern prince, or rival the sturdy vices of the drunken Thracians.[15] Deceitful character of Alcibiades.

[14] Lysias cont. Alcibiad. et Xenoph. Memorab. Socrat. l. i. p. 715.

[15] Nepos in Alcibiad.

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The first specimen of his political conduct discovered the extraordinary resources of his versatile mind. He opposed the peace of Nicias, as the work of a rival, whom he wished to supplant.

His views

His ambition longed for war, and the Spartans deserved his resentment, having, in all their transactions with Athens, testified the utmost respect for Nicias, while they were at no pains to conceal their want of regard for himself, though his family had been long connected with their republic by an intercourse of hospitality, and he had endeavoured to strengthen that connection by his personal good offices to the Lacedæmonians taken in Sphacteria. To gratify at once his resentment, his ambition, and his jealousy, he determined to renew the war with Sparta; a design by no means difficult at the present juncture.

favoured by the state of Greece. Olymp. xc. 1. A. C. 420.

In compliance with the peace of Nicias, the Spartans withdrew their troops from Amphipolis; but they could restore neither that city, nor the neighbouring places in Macedon, to the dominion of Athens. The Athenians, agreeably to the treaty, allowed the captives taken in Sphacteria to meet the longing embraces of their kinsmen and friends; but good policy forbade their surrendering Pylus, until the enemy had prepared to perform the conditions stipulated in return. Mutual unwillingness, or inability, to comply with the articles of peace, sowed the seeds of animosity, which found a favourable soil in both republics. The authority of those magistrates, who supported the pacific measures of

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Nicias and Pleistoanax, had expired. The Spartan youth wished, by new hostilities, to cancel the memory of a war, which had been carried on without profit, and terminated with dishonour. But the wiser part perceived that better success could not be expected while the Athenians possessed Pylus. In their eagerness to recover that fortress, they renewed their alliance with the Thebans, from whom they received Panactum, which they hoped to exchange for Pylus; forgetting, in this transaction, an important clause in their treaty with Athens, "that neither of the contracting powers should, without mutual communication and consent, conclude any new alliance." The Thebans rejoiced in the prospect of embroiling the affairs of Athens and Sparta; and the Corinthians, guided by the same hostile views, readily concurred with the Thebans, and openly re-entered into the Lacedæmonian confederacy. [16]

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He outwits the Spartan ambassadors. Olymp. xc. 1. A. C. 420.

Having concluded this negociation, the Spartans, who yielded to none in the art of dissembling, dispatched ambassadors to Athens, excusing what they termed an apparent infringement of the treaty, and requesting that state to accept Panactum (which had been carefully dismantled) in exchange for Pylus. The senate of Athens heard their proposal without suspicion, especially as they declared themselves invested with full powers to embrace every reasonable plan of present accommodation and permanent friendship. It now remained for the ambassadors to propose

[16] Thucydid. l. v. passim.

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their demand in the popular assembly, which they had reason to hope might be deceived still more easily than the senate. But in this expectation they were disappointed by a contrivance of Alcibiades, no less singular than audacious. Having invited the ambassadors to an entertainment, during which he talked of their republic with more than his wonted respect, and testified the utmost solicitude for the success of their negociation, he observed to them, that one circumstance gave him much concern, their having mentioned full powers. They must beware of repeating that error in the assembly, because the natural rapacity of the populace, apprised of that circumstance, would not fail to insist on such conditions as the honour of Sparta could not possibly comply with. If they concealed the extent of their commission, the declaring of which could only serve to indicate timidity on the one side, and to provoke insolence on the other, he pledged himself to obtain the recovery of Pylus, and the gratification of their utmost hopes. On this occasion the Spartans injudiciously confided in a man, who had been irritated by the former neglect and ingratitude of their republic. When they appeared next day in the assembly, Alcibiades demanded, with a loud voice, the object and extent of their commission. According to the concerted plan, they denied their having full powers. The artful Athenian, affecting a transport of indignation, arraigned the audacity and baseness of a people by whom his own unsuspecting temper had been egregiously abused. "But

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yesterday they declared their full powers in the senate; they denied to-day what yesterday they displayed with ostentation. Such (I now perceive) is the usual duplicity of their republic. It is thus, they have restored Amphipolis. It is thus, Athenians! they have restored the neighbouring towns in Macedon: it is thus they have, indeed, put you in possession of Panactum, but with demolished walls; and after concluding an alliance with Athens, ratified by solemn oath, most treacherously and daringly infringed it, by entering into a league with Thebes, your determined and inveterate enemy. Can you still, men of Athens! tamely submit to such indignities? Do you not expel such traitors (pointing to the ambassadors) from your presence, and from your city?" This extraordinary harangue totally disconcerted the Spartans. Had their confusion allowed them to extenuate their fault by declaring the truth, the least reflection must have suggested, that Alcibiades would represent their simple story as a new turn of ingenious artifice. They retired abruptly from the assembly[17]; Nicias, and the other partizans of Sparta, shared their disgrace; and the Athenians were soon afterwards persuaded by Alcibiades to embrace the Argive alliance.[18]

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The Peloponnesian war renewed.

It might be expected, that the weight of such a powerful confederacy should have speedily crushed the debility of Sparta, already exhausted

[17] Thucydides mentions the shock of an earthquake, which occasioned the dissolution of that assembly, before coming to any conclusion.

[18] Thucydid. l. v. p. 374, et seq. Plut. in Alcibiad.

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Olymp. xc. 2. A. C. 419.

by the former war. But the military operations of Greece depended less on the relative strength of contending powers, than on the alternate preponderance of domestic factions. In the year following the treaty, the Athenians sent a small body of troops to assist their Peloponnesian allies in the reduction of Epidaurus, Tegea, and other hostile cities in Argolis and Arcadia. Yet in the ensuing year, when the Spartans, dreading the loss of some cities, and the defection of others, made a vigorous effort to retrieve their authority in Peloponnesus, the Athenians alone discovered little inclination, and exerted no activity, to obstruct their measures for that purpose. Pleistoanax being a partizan of the peace of Nicias, the Spartans entrusted the command to Agis, his more warlike colleague. All Lacedæmonians of the military age were summoned to the field. The dangerous expedient of arming the Helots was adopted on this important emergence. The Spartan allies showed unusual ardour in their cause. The Thebans sent ten thousand foot, and one thousand horsemen [19]; the Corinthians two thousand heavy-armed men; the Megarians almost an equal number; the ancient cities of Pallené and Sicyon in Achaia gave a powerful and ready assistance; while the small, but generous republic of Phlius, whose territory, bordering on Argolis, was appointed for the rendezvous

[19] They had, however, but five hundred horses; ἱππεῖς πεντακόσιοι καὶ ἀνίπποι ἴσοι. Perhaps the ἀνίπποι, those not provided with horses, served as attendants on the horsemen. The mixing of light infantry with the cavalry was frequent in later times: but of this hereafter.

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of the confederates, took the field with the whole body of citizens and slaves capable of bearing arms.[20] CHAP. XVIII.

The Argives observed the approaching storm, and prepared to resist it. The Eleans and Mantineans joined them; and although the Athenians were long expected in vain, the Argives did not lose courage, but boldly marched forth to oppose the invasion. The skilful movements of King Agis intercepted their return to Argos; the high grounds above them were occupied by the Corinthians and Phliasians; their retreat towards Nemea was cut off by the Bœotians and Megarians. A battle seemed inevitable in the winding vale of Argos; but it is easier to admire, than explain, the subsequent conduct of either army. Whether the Argive commanders[21] were disconcerted by the judicious position of the enemy, or that compassion touched their minds on perceiving such numerous bodies of men, chiefly natives of the same peninsula, sprung from the same blood, and speaking the same Doric tongue, prepared to embrue their parricidal hands in kindred blood; or that, being secretly partizans of[22] aristocracy they were unwilling to come to extremities with Sparta; it is certain that instead of joining battle, they entered into conference with the Lacedæmonian King. In consequence of this unexpected

The Spartan and Argive armies face each other, but part without engaging. Olymp. xc. 3. A. C. 418.

[20] Thucyd. l. v. p. 384. et seq.

[21] Or rather Thrasyllus, who was one of five generals, but who seems to have enjoyed some pre-eminence over his colleagues. Perhaps it was his turn to command.

[22] Alciphron, who, with Thrasyllus, was the principal agent in this affair, was the "πρόξενος Λακεδαιμονίων," the public host of the Lacedæmonians. Thucyd. p. 386.

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measure, a truce was concluded between the chiefs, without the concurrence or knowledge of the officers or troops in either army. The Argives, Thrasyllus and Alciphron, engaged that their countrymen should give complete satisfaction for the injuries of which they were accused; and King Agis, whose authority, by the Spartan laws, was absolute in the field, led off his obsequious army.

Discontents hereby occasioned in both states.

Whatever might be the cause of this measure, it occasioned (after the first pause of silent astonishment) universal discontent, followed by loud and licentious clamours. The Spartans complained, "That, after assembling such a body of men as had scarcely ever been collected in Peloponnesus, whose attachment to their cause was ardent, whose numbers and courage were invincible, and after surrounding their enemies on every side, and depriving them of every resource, the glorious hope, or rather certainty, of the most complete and important victory, should have been sacrificed, in one moment, by the caprice, the cowardice, or the corruption of their general." The Argives lamented, "That their numerous enemies, whom they had a fair opportunity of engaging to advantage in their own country, should have been allowed to escape from their hands by a hasty and ill-judged composition." Nor did they confine their resentment to vain complaints. The most daring or most seditious attacked the houses of Thrasyllus and Alciphron. The rest soon joined in the tumult. The effects of the generals were plun-

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dered or confiscated; and their lives were saved, with difficulty, by the respected sanctuary of Argive Juno. CHAP. XVIII.

Though the Greeks, and indeed the ancients in general, seldom employed resident ambassadors in foreign states, Alcibiades was then invested with that character at Argos. His activity would not fail to promote the popular tumult, in which his own and the Athenian interest was concerned. On a future occasion he boasted, that, chiefly at his instigation, the Argives and their allies were persuaded to break the truce; a measure greatly facilitated by the long-expected arrival of the Athenian transports, conveying a reinforcement of twelve hundred soldiers, and a body of three hundred cavalry. Encouraged by this reinforcement, the Argives, regardless of the truce, attacked the ancient and wealthy city of Orchomenus in Arcadia, which, after a feeble resistance, submitted to their arms. They next proceeded to lay siege to the neighbouring town of Tegea, a design extremely contrary to the inclination of the Elians, who were eager to chastise the inhabitants of Lepreum, a district on their own frontier. The Argives, however, paid no regard to their demands; and the Elians, offended by this contumely, returned home in disgust.

Alcibiades persuades the Argives to break the truce. Olymp. xc. 3. A. C. 418.

The Lacedæmonians learned with indignation the submission of Orchomenus, the siege of Tegea, and the open infraction of the treaty. They had formerly murmured against the imprudent or perfidious measures of King Agis;

The Spartans take the field.

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but when they felt the full effects of his misconduct, their resentment became outrageous. In the first emotions of their animosity, they determined to destroy his house, and to subject him to a fine in value several thousand pounds sterling, which, in all probability, he would have been unable to pay. But his eloquence and address appeased the general clamour; and, as the anger of popular assemblies is easily converted into pity, he was again taken into favour. His known talents for war recommended him to the command of the army; and he assured his countrymen, that his future services should speedily wipe off the undeserved stain on his character. The Spartans, however, first elected on this occasion ten counsellors to attend their kings in the field, to restrain their too precipitate resolves, and controul their too absolute authority.

Battle of Mantinæa.

Having taken this precaution, the necessity of which seemed justified by recent experience, they summoned the assistance of their allies, whose ardour to renew hostilities was equal to their own. They proceeded with a numerous army, (though inferior to that formerly collected, as their confederates beyond the Isthmus had not yet time to join them,) and marched directly to the town of Mantinæa, expecting either to take that place, or to oblige the enemy to defend it, by withdrawing his troops from the siege of Tegea. The approach of the Argives prevented the surprise of Mantinæa; and both armies, whose ambition or resentment had been so lately disappointed of

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an opportunity to display their valour or their fury, eagerly prepared for an engagement.

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Military oration.

According to ancient custom, the leaders of the several nations addressed their respective troops. The Mantinæans were animated "by the sight of their city, for the defence of which, as well as for the safety of their wives and children, they were exhorted valiantly to contend. The event of the battle must determine the important alternative of dominion and servitude; dominion, which they had lately assumed over various cities in Arcadia, and servitude, which they had already suffered under the cruel tyranny of Sparta." The Argives were reminded "of their ancient pre-eminence in Peloponnesus, which they had recently recovered, and which their honour was now called to maintain. They were reminded of the long and bloody wars which they had formerly carried on, in order to repel the usurpation of a powerful and ambitious neighbour. This was the same enemy who actually provoked their arms, and gave them an opportunity of revenging, in one day, the accumulated injustice of many centuries." The Athenians heard, and repeated, "That it was glorious to march at the head of gallant and faithful allies, and to shew themselves deserving of their hereditary renown. They yielded to none in bravery; their power was unrivalled; and when they had overcome the Lacedæmonians, even in the Peloponnesus, their dominion would be more extensive and more secure."

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The Spartans victorious.

The Spartans briefly exhorted their followers, and each other, "to exert that innate valour which had ever animated their breasts, and which could receive no additional force from a tedious display of useless words." Thus saying, they marched with a slow and firm step, regulated by the sound of the flute, to meet the impetuous onset[23] of the Argives and Athenians. Above a thousand of the former, chosen from the flower of the noblest youth of Argos, had been employed, since the first dissensions occasioned by the peace of Nicias, in the constant exercise of arms, in order to maintain the honourable pretensions of their country. They behaved with signal bravery. The Athenians were not wanting to their ancient fame. The Mantinæans strenuously defended every thing most dear to them. But the allied army had been considerably weakened by the desertion of the Elians; and the martial enthusiasm of King Agis, seconded by the persevering valour of the Spartans[24], decided the fortune of the battle. The

[23] The admirable verses of Milton, who was a diligent reader of Thucydides, are the best commentary on this battle.

Anon they move
In perfect phalanx, to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders, such as rais'd
To height of noblest temper heroes old,
Arming to battle; and instead of rage,
Deliberate valour breath'd firm and unmov'd, &c.
Par. Lost, b. i.

[24] If the text is not corrupt, the words of Thucydides are very remarkable: Αλλα μαλιστα δη κατα τουτο τη εμπειρια Λακεδαιμονιοι ελασσουδεντες, τη ανδρεια εδειξαν ουχ ησσον περιγενομενοι. p. 394. "That the Lacedæmonians, exceedingly inferior as they appeared on this occasion to the enemy in military skill, shewed themselves as much superior to them in true manly courage." It appears from the descrip-

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allies were repulsed, broken, thrown into disorder, and put to flight. The Spartans, unwilling to irritate their despair, or superstitiously complying with an ancient maxim, which enjoined them "to make a bridge of gold for a flying enemy," did not continue the pursuit, but speedily returned home to celebrate the Carnean festival, rejoicing in the restored lustre of their arms, and at having recovered their authority in the Peloponnesus. CHAP. XVIII.

This, in fact, proved the immediate consequence of a battle, which was not so bloody as might have been expected, the vanquished having lost *eleven*, and the victors only *three*, hundred. But the revolutions of Greece chiefly depended on the fluctuating politics of domestic factions. The Spartans had a numerous party in Argos itself, who, emboldened by the recent victory of their friends, immediately took arms, abolished the popular government, destroyed the partisans of Athens, abjured the league with that state, and entered into a new confederacy with Sparta. This event happened a few weeks Tumults in Argos.

tion of the battle, that the Lacedæmonians were defective, not in skill, but in discipline. In approaching the enemy, their right wing extended too far, which frequently happened from the desire of every soldier to cover his unarmed side by the shield of the next person on his right. In consequence of this tendency, the Lacedæmonian left wing was over-reached by the enemy's right. Agis ordered the Skiritæ and Brasidians to wheel from their places on the right, and lengthen the front of the left wing; commanding the battalions of Hipponoidas and Aristocles to fill up the vacuity occasioned by this movement. But these generals absolutely refused to obey orders, and were afterwards banished Sparta on that account. Thucydid. p. 393. & seq.

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after the engagement, and towards the close of the fourteenth winter of the Peloponnesian war. During the two following years, Argos paid dearly for a moment of transient splendour, having undergone three bloody revolutions, which renewed the atrocities of Corcyrean sedition. The contest ended, as in Corcyra, in favour of the Athenians and democracy.

Massacre of the Scioneans.

The affairs of the Peloponnesus had long occupied, without engrossing, the attention of Athens. The year preceding her alliance with Argos, the Athenians reduced the rebellious city of Scioné, in the peninsula of Pallené, against which their resentment had been provoked to the utmost fury, because the Scioneans, though inhabiting a country almost surrounded by the sea, had defied the naval power of Athens, and, amidst the misfortunes of that state, revolted to her enemies. The citizens of Scioné became the victims of a revenge equally cruel and imprudent. The males, above the age of puberty, were put to the sword; the women and children dragged into servitude; the name and honours of the city extinguished for ever; and the territory planted with a new colony, consisting chiefly of Platæan exiles. These enormous cruelties alarmed the terror, exasperated the resentment, and invigorated the resistance, of the neighbouring republics. Their defence was undertaken by Perdiccas, King of Macedon, whom the Athenians therefore interdicted the use of the Grecian seas. But that ambitious people made so little progress in reducing the Mace-

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donian coast, that they finally desisted from this hopeless design, contenting themselves with guarding those places which still avowed their allegiance, with re-establishing domestic order, and with collecting the customary tribute from their numerous colonies and dependencies. CHAP. XVIII.

The productive industry diffused through all branches of the community, the equality of private fortune, the absence of habitual luxury, together with the natural advantages of their soil and climate, enabled the Greeks to flourish amidst furious and bloody wars. After a short period of tranquillity, their exuberant population overflowed, and was obliged to discharge itself in foreign colonies or conquests. Such a period Athens enjoyed for five years after the peace of Nicias, as the Macedonian and Argive wars only employed her activity, without exhausting her strength. The necessity of exerting her superfluous vigour in some useful and honourable design, was fatally experienced, in the year following, by the unfortunate island of Melos, one of the largest of the Cyclades, lying directly opposite to the Cape of Malea, the southern promontory of Laconia. The Athenians attack Melos. Olymp. xci. 1. A. C. 416.

This beautiful island, sixty miles in circumference, of a circular form, of an agreeable temperature, and affording, in peculiar perfection [25], the usual productions of a fine climate, had early Description of that island.

[25] The island of Melos is every where impregnated with iron, bitumen, sulphur, and other minerals. It is described by Tournefort as a great laboratory. Its subterranean fires are supposed to give peculiar force and flavour to its wines and fruits.

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invited the colonization of the Spartans; and the happy settlement had enjoyed political independence for seven hundred years. The strength and importance of the capital, which had the same name with the island, may be understood by the armament of thirty ships, and nearly three thousand soldiers, which the Athenians brought against it. Before they commenced hostilities, either by attacking the city, or by ravaging the country, they sent ambassadors to the Melians, in order to persuade them to surrender, without incurring the danger or the punishment of an unequal, and probably a fruitless resistance. The cautious islanders, well acquainted with the eloquence and address of the enemy with whom they had to contend, denied them permission to speak before the public assembly, but appointed a deputation of the magistrates to hear and examine their demands. The Athenian ambassadors were received in the senate-house, where a most important and interesting conference was held[26], which, while it engages our compassion for the unhappy victims of ambition, explains the prevailing sentiments and opinions of the Greeks in matters of war and government, and illustrates the daring injustice of the Athenian republic. The ambassadors began the dialogue, by observing, "That since the distrust of the Melians, probably arising from the conscious weakness of their cause, had refused them the liberty of addressing, in a continued oration, the assembly of the people, they

Conference between the commissioners of Athens and Melos.

[26] Thucydid. l. v. p. 400. & seq.

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should use that mode of conference which seemed most agreeable to the inclination of their adversaries, and patiently listen to the objections which might occur to any part of their discourse." *Melians.* "The proposal is just and reasonable; but you have come hither with an armed force, which renders you judges in your own cause. Though vanquished in debate, you may still conquer by arms; but if *we* yield in argument, we must submit to slavery." *Athenians.* "If you intend to talk of matters foreign to the subject, we have done." *M.* "It is surely excusable for those, whose all is at stake, to turn themselves on every side, and to suggest their suspicions and their doubts. But let the conference be carried on in the manner which you have proposed." *A.* "And, on both sides, let all superfluous arguments be omitted; either that *we*, having repelled and conquered the Persians, are entitled to govern the Greeks; or, that *you*, being a colony of Lacedæmon, are entitled to independence. Let us speak like men of sense and experience, who know that the equal rules of justice are observed only by men of an equal condition; but that it belongs to the strong to command, and to the weak to obey; because such is the interest of both." *M.* "How can our interests and yours coincide?" *A.* "By submission, you will save your lives; and by preserving you, we will increase our own power." *M.* "Consider (for this also must be mentioned, since, disregarding *justice*, you hearken only to *utility*) that your unprovoked invasion of the

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Melians will rouse the resentment of all Greece; will render all neutral states your enemies; and, if ever your empire should decline, (as what human grandeur is not subject to decay?) will expose you to a dreadful and just punishment." *A.* "The continuance of our empire is the care of fortune and the gods; the little that man can do to preserve it, *we* will not neglect. The liberty of Melos offends the pride of the neighbouring isles, and stirs them to rebellion. The interest of our present power must prevail over the apprehension of future danger." *M.* "While the Athenians are thus prepared to incur danger for the preservation of empire, and their subject islands to defy death for the hope of freedom, would it not be base cowardice in us, who have long enjoyed liberty, to decline any toil or danger for maintaining the most valuable and the most glorious of all human possessions?" *A.* "We are not come hither to dispute the prize of valour, but to offer terms of safety." *M.* "The event of war is uncertain; there is some hope in resistance, none in submission." *A.* "Flattering hope often deceives the prosperous and the powerful, but always destroys the weak and unfortunate, who, disregarding natural means of preservation, have recourse to idle dreams of the fancy, to omens, oracles, divination, and all the fallacious illusions of a vain superstition." *M.* "We know that it will be difficult for the Melians to contend with the strength and fortune of Athens: yet we trust that the gods will uphold the justice of our cause; and that the Lace-

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dæmonians, from whom we are descended, moved by a sense of honour, will defend their own blood." *A.* "Believe not that Athens will be forsaken by the gods. Ambition is implanted in man. The wisdom of Providence, not an Athenian decree, has established the inevitable law, that the strong should command the weak. As to the assistance of the Lacedæmonians, we sincerely congratulate your happy ignorance of their principles. Whatever equity prevails in their domestic institutions, they have but one rule respecting their neighbours, which is, to regulate all their proceedings towards them by their own conveniency." *M.* "It is chiefly this consideration which affords us hope, that they will not forsake an island which they have planted, lest they should be regarded as traitors, than which nothing could be more unfavourable to their interest, especially since Melos, lying in the neighbourhood of their own territories, would be a dangerous possession in the hands of an enemy." *A.* "The timid caution of the Lacedæmonians seldom takes the field, even against their inveterate adversaries in the Peloponnesus, unless when their standard is crowded by numerous allies. It is not to be imagined that, for the safety of a colony, they will, unassisted and alone, cross the Cretan sea, to contend with the superior navy of Athens." *M.* "Should the Lacedæmonians be averse to sail, they can transport others in their stead; and the extent of the Cretan sea may elude the vigilance of your ships; or, should that probability fail, the Lacedæmo-

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nians may attack your subjects on the continent, and accomplish the designs of the warlike Brasidas." *A.* "You are determined, it seems, to learn, by fatal experience, that fear never compelled the Athenians to desist from their commenced undertakings; especially never to raise the siege of any place which they had once invested. For during the whole of this long conference, you have not made a single observation capable of affording any just ground of confidence. Dazzled by the splendour of words, you talk of honour and independence, rejecting the offers of a powerful state, whose arms you are unable to resist, and whose protection you might obtain at the expence of a moderate tribute. Lest shame should have any share in this dangerous behaviour, we shall leave you to consult privately, only reminding you once more, that your present deliberations involve the fate of your country."

Magnanimity of the Melians.

The Athenian ambassadors retired; and shortly afterwards the Melians recalled them, and "declared their unanimous resolution not to betray, in one unlucky hour, the liberty which they had maintained for seven hundred years; depending on the vigorous assistance of their Lacedæmonian kinsmen, and trusting especially in that Divine Providence which had hitherto most wonderfully preserved them amidst the general convulsions of Greece. But they entreated the Athenians to accept their offers of neutrality, and to abstain from unprovoked violence." The ambassadors prepared for returning to the camp, leaving the

Conquest of Melos, and cruel

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treatment of the inhabitants.

commissioners with a sarcastic threat, "That of all men, in such a delicate situation, the Melians alone thought the future more certain than the past, and would grievously suffer for their folly, in preferring, to the proposals of certain and immediate safety, the deceitfulness of hope, the instability of fortune, and the vain prospect of Lacedæmonian aid." The Athenians, irritated by opposition, invested, without delay, the capital of Melos, which was blocked up for several months by sea and land. The besieged, after suffering cruelly by famine, made several desperate sallies, seized the Athenian magazines, and destroyed part of their works. But towards the end of winter, their resistance was defeated by the vigorous efforts of the enemy, combined with domestic treason. The males above the age of fourteen shared the unhappy fate of the Scioneans. The women and children were subjected to perpetual servitude, and five hundred new inhabitants, drawn from the neighbouring colonies of Athens, were sent to occupy the vacant lands, which had been cultivated and adorned for seven centuries by the labour of the exterminated Melians.[27]

[27] Thucydid. l. v. p. 410. ad fin.

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Alcibiades promotes the Sicilian Expedition. — Revolutions in that Island. — Embassy to Athens. — Extravagant Views of Alcibiades — Opposed by Nicias. — The Athenians prepare to invade Sicily. — Their Armament beheld with Suspicion by the Italian States. — Deliberations concerning the Mode of carrying on the War. — Alcibiades takes Catana by Stratagem. — His Intrigues in Messené. — He is unseasonably recalled to Athens. — Charged with Treason and Impiety. — Escapes to Sparta. — Nicias determines to attack Syracuse. — Description of that City. — The Athenians prevail in a Battle. — Return to Catana and Naxos.

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Alcibiades promotes the expedition into Sicily.

THE inhuman massacre of the Melians has been ascribed by an instructive, though often inaccurate biographer[1], to the unfeeling pride of Alcibiades. But more ancient and authentic writers[2], whose silence seems to exculpate the son of Clinias from this atrocious accusation, represent him as the principal author of the expedition against Sicily; an expedition not more unjust in its principle, than fatal in its consequences.

Revolutions in that island. A. C. 479—468.

The salutary union between the princes of Syracuse and Agrigentum triumphed, as we had

[1] Plut. in Alcib.

[2] Thucydid. l. v. Lysias Orat. cont. Alcib.

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occasion to relate, over the ambition and resources of Carthage. Sicily flourished under the virtuous administration of Gelon and Theron[3]; but its tranquillity was disturbed by the dissensions of their immediate successors. Hieron king of Syracuse proved victorious in a long and bloody war, during which the incapacity and misfortunes of his rival Thrasideus emboldened the resentment of his subjects, already provoked by his injustice and cruelty.[4] He escaped the popular fury, but fell a victim to his own despair; and the Agrigentines, having expelled the family of an odious tyrant, instituted a republican form of policy.

Reign of Hieron in Syracuse.

The false, cruel, and avaricious Hieron, (for such he is described[5] in the first years of his reign,) was not likely to benefit under the dangerous influence of prosperity. But his mind was still capable of reflection; and in the course of a long sickness and confinement, he discovered the emptiness of such objects as kings are taught to admire, and had recourse to the solid pleasures of the mind. By conversing with Grecian philosophers, he learned the most important of all lessons, that of conversing with himself; a conversation which none but the most virtuous or the most vicious of men can long and frequently maintain, without deriving from it essential profit. With the improvement of his understanding, the sentiments of Hieron improved; his character and manners underwent a

[3] See above, p. 56.
[4] Diodor l. xi c. 60. & seq.
[5] Diodor. Sic. l. xi c. 66.

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total change; and the latter years of his reign adorn the history of Sicily, and the age in which he lived.[6] The poets Simonides, Æschylus, and Bacchilides, frequented his court, and admired the greatness of his mind, rather than of his fortune. The sublime genius of Pindar has celebrated the magnificent generosity of his illustrious patron. And in an age when writing was the picture of conversation, because men talked as they needed not have been ashamed to write, the impartial disciple of Socrates, who had nothing to hope or to fear from the ashes of a king of Sicily, has represented Hieron, in the Dialogue entitled from his name[7], as a model of wisdom and virtue.

The tyranny of Thrasybulus, and establishment of democracy. Olymp. lxxviii. 3. A. C. 466.

It is a mortifying reflection, that the inimitable qualities of a virtuous prince should naturally encourage the sloth, or irritate the vices, of a degenerate successor. The glorious reign of Hieron was followed by the bloody tyranny of Thrasybulus; a wretch, who, disgracing the throne and human nature, was expelled from Sicily by the just indignation of his subjects. Resentment is more permanent than gratitude. The Syracusans forgot the fame of Gelon; they forgot the recent merit of Hieron; and, that they might never be again subjected to a tyrant like Thrasybulus, exchanged the odious power of kings for the dangerous fury of democracy.[8]

Effects of that revolution.

The inferior cities having successively imitated the example of Agrigentum and Syracuse, the

[6] Ælian. l. ix. c. 7.
[7] Xenophont. Hieron.
[8] Aristot. de Repub. l. v. c. 12.

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Grecian colonies in Sicily experienced the disorders of that tumultuous liberty which had so long prevailed in the mother-country. Distracted by internal discord, and harassed by external hostility, they had neither leisure nor inclination to take part in the politics of Greece. The republic of Syracuse, which was alone capable of interposing with effect in the quarrels of that country, imitated, instead of opposing, the ambition of Athens. Most of the Dorian settlements had become confederates, or rather tributaries, to the Syracusans, and towards the commencement of the Peloponnesian war, that aspiring people, though torn by domestic factions, strenuously exerted their valour against the Ionic settlements of Leontium, Catana, and Naxos.

Dissensions in Sicily, in which the Athenians intefere. Olymp. lxxxviii. 3. A. C. 426.

While these unhappy islanders struggled with the agitations of a government more turbulent than the whirlpools of Scylla and Charybdis, they likewise enjoyed, however, the peculiar advantages of democracy; which, of all political constitutions, presents the widest scope to the exercise of superior talents, and has always been the most productive in great men. The active fermentation of popular assemblies had given the eloquence of a Gorgias to Leontium, and the abilities of a Hermocrates to Syracuse. In the sixth year of the Peloponnesian war, the former came to Athens to solicit the protection of that republic against the unjust usurpation of the Sicilian capital. His arguments convinced the judgment, and the brilliant harmony of his style transported the sensibility, of the Athenians.

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They immediately dispatched twenty ships of war to the assistance of their Ionic brethren. Two years afterwards a similar request was made, and as readily complied with; and the Athenians seemed disposed to engage with vigour in the war, when the foresight of Hermocrates, alarmed by the intrusion of these ambitious strangers, promoted a general congress of the states of Sicily.

Appeased by Hermocrates. Olymp. lxxxix. 1. A. C. 424.

This convention was held at the central town of Gela; it was attended by the plenipotentiaries of all the Doric and Ionic cities. Hermocrates represented Syracuse; and illustrious as that republic was, approved himself worthy of its highest honours. While the deputies of other states dwelt on their particular grievances, and urged their separate interests, Hermocrates regarded and enforced only the general interest of Sicily. His arguments finally prevailed, and all parties were engaged to terminate their domestic contests, lest the whole island should fall a prey to a foreign power.[9]

New dissensions. Olymp. xci. 1. A. C. 416.

But a plan of union so seasonable and salutary, depended on the transient influence of a single man, while the principles of discord were innumerable and permanent. Within a few years after this event, Leontium was taken and destroyed, its inhabitants reduced to the wretched condition of exiles, and its confederates, the Ægesteans, closely besieged by the conjunct arms of Selinus and Syracuse. The unfortunate communities again sent an embassy to Athens,

Demands of the Ægesteans;

[9] Thucydid. p. 290.

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pleading the rights of consanguinity, and addressing not only the passions but the interest of their powerful allies. "The Athenians," they insisted, "were bound by every principle of sound policy to repress the growing greatness of Syracuse, which must otherwise become a formidable accession to the Peloponnesian league; and now was the time for this meritorious undertaking, while their Ionian kinsmen in Sicily were still capable of exerting some vigour in their own defence." In order to enforce these arguments, the ambassadors of Ægesta gave an ostentatious, and even a very false description of the wealth of their republic; which, according to their account, was capable of defraying the whole expense of the war. Their fellow-citizens at home carried on the deception by a most unjustifiable artifice, displaying to the Athenian commissioners sent to confer with them, the borrowed riches of their neighbours, and raising, by extraordinary expedients, the sum of sixty talents of silver, to maintain, for a month, an Athenian fleet of sixty sail, as if they had purposed monthly to repeat this large subsidy, which at once exhausted their faculties.[10]

with which the Athenians imprudently comply.

The arguments of their Sicilian allies were doubtless entitled to considerable weight with the Athenians; yet various reasons might have dissuaded that ambitious people from undertaking, at the present conjuncture, an expedition against the powerful republic of Syracuse. The cloud of war, which Pericles saw advancing with

[10] Thucydid. p. 444.

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rapid motion from the Peloponnesus, had been at length dispelled by the valour and fortune of the Athenians; not, however, before the arms of Brasidas had shaken their empire to the foundation. The same storm might be again collected, if the Athenians removed their armies from home, especially if they were unfortunate abroad, since the wounded pride of Sparta would eagerly seize the first opportunity of revenge. The rebellion of the Macedonian cities was still unsubdued, and it would be highly imprudent and dangerous, before recovering the allegiance of those ancient possessions, to attempt the acquisition of new territories. Should the Athenian expedition against Sicily be crowned with the most flattering success, it would still be difficult, nay, impossible, to preserve such a distant and extensive conquest; but should this ambitious design fail in the execution, as there was too good reason to apprehend, the misfortunes of the Athenians, whose greatness was the object both of terror and of envy, would encourage the rebellious spirit of their subjects and allies, excite the latent animosity of the Peloponnesians, and reinforce their ancient enemies by the resentment and hostility of Syracuse and her confederates, justly provoked by the daring invasion of their island.

Extravagant views of Alcibiades.

These prudential considerations were unable to cool the ardour of the Athenian assembly inflamed by the breath of their favourite Alcibiades. It is a just and profound observation of Machiavel, that the real powers of government

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are often contracted to a narrower point in republics than in monarchies: an observation which that sagacious statesman had learned from the experience of his native city, and which he might have confirmed by the history of the Greeks, whose political measures, and even whose national character, depended on the transient influence of a few individuals. Under the direction of Aristides and Themistocles, the Athenians displayed the soundest policy, adorned by unshaken probity and by heroic valour. Cimon inspired the generous ambition which animated his own breast: a dignified grandeur and magnanimous firmness distinguished the long administration, I had almost said reign, of Pericles. The son of Clinias succeeded to the power and authority, without succeeding to the virtues of those great men, whom his pride disdained to imitate. Regardless of order and decency, with a licentious magnificence most offensive to the spirit of republican equality, he blended a certain elegance of manners, which not only repelled censure, but attracted applause. Thus dispensed from observing the established formalities of private life, he expected that the glory of his administration might soar above the ordinary dictates of political prudence.[11] Though he preferred what was useful to what was honest, he preferred what was brilliant to what was useful, and, disdaining the common gifts of valour and

[11] See Plut. in Alcibiad. Isocrat. de Pace; above all, the animated picture in Plato's Republic (l. viii. c. 200. et seq.), of which Alcibiades, doubtless, was the original.

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fortune, aspired at objects extraordinary and unattainable. The recovery of the Athenian possessions, and the re-establishment of an empire, already too extensive, might have satisfied the ambition of a bold and active statesman. But the extravagant hopes of Alcibiades expatiated in a wider field. The acquisition of Sicily itself he regarded only as a necessary introduction to wider and more important conquests. The intermediate situation of that beautiful and fertile island opened, on the one hand, an easy communication with the eastern front of Italy, which, from Brundusium to the Sicilian frith, was adorned by populous and flourishing cities; and, on the other, afforded a short and safe passage to the northern shores of Africa, which, for many ages, had been cultivated and enriched by the united labours of the Greeks and Carthaginians. In his waking or sleeping dreams, Alcibiades grasped the wide extent of those distant possessions, by the resources of which he expected finally to subdue the pertinacious spirit, and obstinate resistance, of the Peloponnesians. Thus secure at home, and sovereign of the sea, Athens might incorporate with her own force that of the conquered provinces, and maintain an unshaken dominion over the most delightful portion of the earth, while her fortunate citizens, delivered from all laborious and mercenary cares, would be supported by the contributions of subject nations, and enabled to display, in their full extent, that taste for splendour and magnificence, that greatness of soul and superiority of genius,

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which justly entitled them to the empire of the world.[12]

The Sicilian expedition opposed by Nicias. Olymp. xci. 2. A. C. 415.

Allured by these extravagant, and flattering prospects of grandeur, the Athenians, in two successive assemblies, held at the short interval of five days, agreed to the resolution of making war against Sicily, and of raising such naval and military force as seemed necessary for carrying it on with vigour and success. While they still deliberated on the latter object, the virtuous Nicias, who had been named with Alcibiades and Lamachus to the command of the projected armament, omitted nothing that prudence could suggest and patriotism enforce, to deter his countrymen from such a dangerous and fatal design. On this memorable occasion, he threw aside his usual timidity, and divested himself of that rigid regard for established forms, which was natural to his age and character. Though the assembly was convened to determine the proportion of supplies and troops, and the means of collecting them with the greatest expedition and facility, he ventured, contrary to ancient custom, to propose a different subject of debate; affirming, "That the interest of Athens was concerned, not in providing the preparations for the Sicilian invasion, but in re-examining the expediency of the war. The assembly ought not to be moved by the arguments and entreaties of the persecuted Ægesteans, and fugitive Leontines, whom resentment had taught to exaggerate, and misery to deceive. Nor ought the vain phantom of

[12] Isocrat. de Pace. Andocid. Orat. iii. p. 269. & Aristoph. Vesp. ver. 656.

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glory and ambition to engage Athens in a design perhaps altogether impracticable, and in the present juncture, peculiarly unseasonable; since it would be madness to excite the flames of a new war, before the ashes of the old were extinguished. The pleas of danger and self-defence were in the highest degree frivolous; for, should the dreaded power of Syracuse be extended over the whole of Sicily, the Athenians would have nothing to apprehend: this event would rather increase their security. In the actual state of the island, particular cities might be persuaded by fear, or interest, to court the protection of the Peloponnesian confederacy; but the victorious Syracuse would disdain to follow the standard of Sparta. Should the former republic, by an effort of uncommon generosity, subject the partial dictates of her pride to the general safety and honour of the Dorian name, sound policy, however, would still prevent her from endangering the precarious empire which she had obtained over her neighbours, by strengthening the confederacy of Peloponnesus, of which the avowed design was to give liberty and independence to all Grecian cities. Should every remote view of policy be disregarded, yet immediate fear would deter the Syracusans from provoking the resentment of Athens, the effects of which they had not as yet experienced, but which, being unknown, must appear the more formidable. It was evident, therefore, that the Sicilian expedition might be omitted without danger; but if this enterprise, which had been hastily resolved on, were injudiciously executed, or if any of those

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misfortunes should happen, which are but too frequent in war, the Athenians would be exposed not only to danger, but to disgrace and ruin. The result of such an important deliberation ought not to be committed to the rash decision of youthful levity; which viewed the Sicilian war, as it did every other object, through the delusive medium of hope, vanity, and ambition; and, totally disregarding the expense and danger to be incurred by the republic, considered only the profits of military command, which might repair the wreck of exhausted fortunes, and supply a new fund for the indulgence of extravagant and licentious pleasures. He had in his eye a youth of that description, the principal author of the expedition, who was surrounded by a numerous band of adherents, determined to applaud his discourse and to promote his measures. It became the wisdom and dignity of the assembly to resist with firmness that juvenile conspiracy. In such a dangerous crisis, it was the duty of the president to dispense with ordinary forms, and to act, not merely as the instrument, but as the physician of a diseased republic. The question ought to be debated a second time; and the Athenians ought to rescind the decree against Sicily, which had passed without sufficient examination, in the absence of several aged and respectable counsellors." [13]

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This discourse immediately called up Alcibiades, who, presuming on his credit with the as-

His discourse answered by

[13] Thucydid. l. vi. p. 417. et seq. The Sicilian expedition is uninterruptedly related through the remainder of the sixth and seventh books of Thucydides. The collateral authority of Diodorus, Plutarch, and the orators, is of little importance.

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Alcibiades.

sembly, acknowledged, "That he had aspired to the command in Sicily, and that he thought himself justly entitled to that honour. The extravagance of which he was accused, had redounded to the profit of his country; since his magnificence at the Olympic games, however it might be traduced by an abusive epithet, had extended the glory of Athens, and deserved the admiration of Greece. His youth and inexperience had effected what the policy of the wisest statesman had often attempted in vain. A powerful confederacy had been formed against Sparta, even in the bosom of the Peloponnesus; and the terror of a domestic foe would long prevent the enmity of that rival state from interrupting the progress of Athenian grandeur. In an expedition, evidently directed to this glorious end, expense and danger ought not be regarded, since wealth was usefully sacrificed to purchase victory and renown; and power was only to be preserved by seizing favourable opportunities to increase and confirm it. To the undertaking which he advised, no reasonable objection could be made; its expense would be furnished by the Ægesteans, and other confederates; and the danger could not be great, as Sicily, however extensive and populous, was inhabited by a promiscuous crowd of various nations, without arms or discipline, devoid of patriotism, and incapable of union." [14]

Nicias explains the difficulties of the war.

The assembly murmured applause, confirmed their former decree, and testified for the war greater alacrity than before. Nicias perceived

[14] Thucydid. p. 129—130.

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the violence of the popular current; still, however, he made one ineffectual effort to resist its force. "The success of an invader," he observed, "commonly depended on the weight and rapidity of his first unexpected impression, which confirmed the confidence of his friends, and excited dismay and terror in his enemies. If the expedition into Sicily must be undertaken in defiance of every difficuly and danger, it ought therefore to be carried into execution with the utmost vigour. The Athenians might thus secure the assistance of Naxos and Catana, which were connected by affinity with the Ægesteans and Leontines. But there remained seven cities, and those far more powerful, with which they must prepare to contend; particularly Selinus and Syracuse, places well provided with ships, magazines, cavalry, archers, heavy-armed troops, and every object and resource most useful in defensive war. An armament simply naval would not be sufficient to cope with such a strength. Five thousand pikemen, with a proportional number of archers and cavalry, could not render the invasion successful. After arriving in Sicily, the towns must be besieged or stormed; workmen, with all sorts of machines and implements, must be collected for those purposes, and transported to an island from which, in the four winter months, a messenger could scarcely return to Athens. This necessary train, which would greatly encumber the fleet and army, must be subsisted in a hostile country. Besides an hundred gallies, a great number of tenders and vic-

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tuallers would be required for the expedition. To collect such an immense mass of war, demanded, doubtless, astonishing ardour and perseverance; but if the Athenians intended to employ a smaller force, he must, in justice to his country and himself, decline accepting the command, since nothing less than what he had described could promise a hope of victory, or prevent the certainty of defeat." [15]

The Athenians prepare for invading Sicily. Olymp. xci. 2. A. C. 415.

The last attempt of Nicias to dissuade his countrymen from this fatal enterprise, by magnifying the difficulty of its execution, produced an opposite effect. The obstacles, which were unable to conquer, only animated the courage of the assembly; and it was determined, that the generals should be invested with full authority to raise such sums of money, and to levy such a body of troops, as might ensure success to their arms. The domestic strength of the Athenians was unequal to the greatness of the undertaking: proper agents were dispatched to demand an extraordinary contribution from their dependent tributaries, as well as to summon the reluctant assistance of their more warlike allies. These auxiliary squadrons were ordered to sail to Corcyra, in which rendezvous the Athenians, towards the middle of the summer, were ready to join their confederates.

The magnitude of their preparations.

The magnitude of the preparations increased the hopes and the ardour of all ranks of men in the republic. The old expected that nothing could resist such a numerous and well-equipped

[15] Thucydid. p. 427—429.

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armament. The young eagerly seized an occasion to gratify their curiosity and love of knowledge in a distant navigation, and to share the honours of such a glorious enterprise. The rich exulted in displaying their magnificence; the poor rejoiced in the immediate assurance of pay sufficient to relieve their present wants [16], and in the prospect of obtaining by their arms the materials of future ease and happiness. Instead of finding any difficulty to complete the levies, the great difficulty consisted in deciding the preference of valour and merit among those who solicited to serve; and the whole complement of forces, to be employed by sea and land, consisted of chosen men. [17]

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The general alacrity to embark.

Amidst the general alacrity felt, or at least expressed, by people of all descriptions (for the dread of incurring public censure made several express what they did not feel,) Socrates [18] alone ventured openly and boldly to condemn the expedition, and to predict the future calamities of his country. But the authority of a sage was unable to check the course of that enthusiasm, which had not been interrupted by the anniver-

[16] The most expert and able seamen received a drachma (sevenpence three farthings) as daily pay, besides donatives from their respective captains. Thucydid. & Plut.

[17] Thucydid. p. 430—433.

[18] Plutarch joins Meton the astrologer with Socrates. But the story of Meton, who pretended madness, burned his house, and entreated the Athenians, that, amidst his domestic misfortunes, he might not be deprived of the comfort of his only son, is inconsistent with the narrative of Thucydides, which proves, that instead of compelling reluctance, there was occasion to repress forwardness, to embark.

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sary festival of Adonis, an ancient and melancholy rite, which inauspiciously returned a few days preceding the embarkation. During this dreary ceremony, the streets of Athens were crowded with spectres clothed in funeral robes; the spacious domes and temples resounded with lugubrious cries; while the Grecian matrons, marching in slow procession, tore their dishevelled hair, beat their naked bosoms, and lamented in mournful strains the untimely death of the lover, and beloved favourite of Venus. [19]

The armament sails from Athens;

When the appointed day arrived, the whole inhabitants of Athens, whether citizens or strangers, assembled early in the Pyræus, to admire the greatest armament ever collected in a Grecian harbour. An hundred gallies were adorned with all the splendour of naval pomp: the troops destined to embark, vied with each other in the elegance of their dress and the brightness of their arms: the alacrity painted in every face, and the magnificence displayed with profusion in every part of the equipage, represented a triumphal show, rather than the stern image of war. But the solidity and greatness of the armament proved that it was intended for use, not for ostentation. Amidst this glare of external pageantry which accompanied the adventurous youth, their friends and kinsmen could not suppress a few parting tears, when they considered the length of the voyage, the various dangers by flood and field, and the uncertainty of

[19] Plut. in Nic. & Alcibiad.

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beholding again the dearest pledges of their affections. But these partial expressions of grief were speedily interrupted by the animating sounds of the trumpet, which issued at once from an hundred ships, and provoked sympathetic acclamations from the shore. The captains then offered solemn prayers to the gods, which were answered by corresponding vows from the spectators: the customary libations were poured out in goblets of gold and silver; and, after the triumphant Pæan had been sung in full chorus, the whole fleet at once set sail, and contended for the prize of naval skill and celerity, until they reached the lofty shores of Ægina, from whence they enjoyed a prosperous navigation to the rendezvous of their confederates at Corcyra.[29] CHAP. XIX.

At Corcyra the commanders reviewed the strength of the armament, which consisted of an hundred and thirty-four ships of war, with a proportional number of transports and tenders. The heavy-armed troops, exceeding five thousand, were attended with a competent body of slingers and archers. The army, abundantly provided in every other article, was extremely deficient in horses, which amounted to no more than thirty. But, at a moderate computation, we may estimate the whole military and naval strength, including slaves and servants, at twenty thousand men. is reviewed at Corcyra.

With this powerful host, had the Athenians at once surprised and assailed the unprepared security of Syracuse, the expedition, however ad- The Athenians sail along the coast of Italy.

[29] Thucydid. l. vi. p. 432. et seq. Plut. in Nicia Diodor. l. xiii. p. 332.

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venturous and imprudent, might, perhaps, have been crowned with success. But the timid mariners of Greece would have trembled at the proposal of trusting such a numerous fleet on the broad expanse of the Ionian sea. They determined to cross the narrowest passage between Italy and Sicily, after coasting along the eastern shores of the former, until they reached the strait of Messina. That this design might be executed with the greater safety, they dispatched three light vessels to examine the disposition of the Italian cities, and to solicit admission into their harbours. The greatest part of Magna Græcia had, indeed, been peopled by Dorians naturally hostile to Athens. But from one Italian city the Athenians had reason to expect a very favourable reception. The effeminate Sybaris had been demolished, as related above[21], by the warlike inhabitants of Crotona, about the time that the Athenians, growing more powerful than their neighbours, began to seize every opportunity to extend their colonies and their dominion. Governed by such principles, they could not long overlook the happy situation of Sybaris, near to which they early formed an establishment that assumed the name of Thurium, from a salubrious fountain of fresh water[22]; and the colony was increased by a numerous supply of emigrants, who, under Athenian leaders, sailed from Greece thirteen years before the Peloponnesian war.[23]

[21] P. 55.

[22] Ονομασαν απο της κρηνης, θουριον. Diodor. l. xii. p. 295.

[23] Suid. ad voc. Lysias.

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The armament at Corcyra, whatever jealousy its power might create in other cities, was entitled to the gratitude of Thurium; presuming on which, the commanders, without waiting the return of the advice-boats, ordered the fleet to proceed, in three divisions, to the Italian coast. But neither the ties of consanguinity, nor the duties acknowledged by colonies towards their parent state, could prevail on the suspicious Thurians to open their gates to the Athenians, even to furnish them with a market. The towns of Tarentum and Locris prohibited them the use of their harbours, and refused to supply them with water; and they coasted the whole extent of the shore, from the promontory of Iapygium to that of Rhegium, before any one city would allow them to purchase the commodities of which they were in want. The magistrates of Rhegium granted this favour, but they granted nothing more; notwithstanding the earnest solicitations of Alcibiades and his colleagues, who exhorted them, as a colony of Eubœa, to assist their brethren of Leontium, whose republic the Athenians had determined to re-establish and to defend. [24]

Are regarded with suspicion by the Italian cities.

Rhegium alone supplies them with a market.

While the armament continued at Rhegium, they were informed by vessels which had been purposely dispatched from Corcyra, that the Ægesteans, notwithstanding the boasted accounts lately given of their riches, possessed only thirty talents in their treasury. This disagreeable intelligence, together with the disappoint-

They are informed of the artifice of the Ægesteans.

[24] Thucydid. p. 443.

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They deliberate on the mode of carrying on the war.

ment of assistance from any Italian city, occasioned a council of war, to consider what measures ought to be pursued in the Sicilian expedition. It was the opinion of Nicias, "That the Ægesteans ought to be furnished with that proportion of ships only, the charges of which they were able to defray; and that the Athenian fleet, having settled, either by arms or by persuasion, the quarrels between them and their neighbours, should return to their own harbours, after sailing along the coast of Sicily, and displaying to the inhabitants of that island both their inclination and their power to protect the weakness of their allies."

Alcibiades declared, "That it would be shameful and ignominious to dissolve such a powerful armament, without performing some exploit worthy the renown of the republic; that, by the prospect of immediate and effectual support, the inferior cities might easily be alienated from their reluctant confederacy with Selinus and Syracuse; after which, the war ought to be carried on with the utmost vigour against those republics, unless they re-established the Leontines in their territory, and gave complete satisfaction to the injured Ægesteans."

Judicious advice of Lamachus;

Lamachus not only approved the active counsels of Alcibiades, but proposed a measure still more enterprising. "The Athenians ought not to waste time in unimportant objects. Instead of striking at the extremities, they ought to assault at once the heart and strength of the enemy. If they immediately attacked Syracuse,

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it would not only be the first, but the last city, which they would have occasion to besiege. Nor could the attempt fail, if undertaken without delay, before the Syracusans had time to recollect themselves, and to provide for their own defence; and while the Athenian troops, as yet undaunted by any check, enjoyed unbroken courage and blooming hopes."

is rejected.

This advice, which does equal honour to the spirit and good sense of Lamachus, was rejected by the timidity of Nicias, and probably by the vanity of Alcibiades. The latter perceived a flattering opportunity of exhausting all the resources of his eloquence and intrigue to get possession of the dependent cities, before he illustrated the glory of his arms in the siege of Syracuse. The fleet sailed from Rhegium to execute *his* plan, which was adopted by his colleagues, as forming the middle between the extremes of their respective opinions. A considerable detachment was sent to examine the preparations and the strength of Syracuse, and to proclaim liberty, and offer protection, to all the captives and strangers confined within its walls.

Alcibiades takes Catana by stratagem.

With another detachment Alcibiades sailed to Naxos, and persuaded the inhabitants to accept the alliance of Athens. The remainder of the armament proceeded to Catana, which refused to admit the ships into the harbour, or the troops into the city. But on the arrival of Alcibiades, the Cataneans allowed him to address the assembly, and propose his demands. The artful Athenian transported the populace, and even

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the magistrates themselves, by the harmony and force of his eloquence; the citizens flocked from every quarter, to hear a discourse which was purposely protracted for several hours; the soldiers forsook their posts; and the enemy, who had prepared to avail themselves of this negligence, burst through the unguarded gates, and became masters of the city. Those of the Cataneans who were most attached to the interests of Syracuse, fortunately escaped death by the celerity of their flight. The rest accepted the proffered friendship of the Athenians. This success would probably have been followed by the surrender of Messené, which Alcibiades had filled with distrust and sedition. But when the plot was ripe for execution[25], the man who had contrived, and who alone could conduct it, was disqualified from serving his country. The arrival of the Salaminian galley recalled Alcibiades to Athens, that he might stand trial for his life.

His intrigues in Messené.

He is unseasonably recalled to Athens.

It would be improper to suspend the course of an interesting narrative, by describing the causes and circumstances of this unexpected event, if they were not immediately connected with the subsequent history of the Sicilian expedition, and with the future fortune of the Athenians, who, after engaging, by the advice of one man, in the most romantic schemes of conquest

[25] Thucydides says, "When Alcibiades knew that he should be banished, he betrayed his accomplices, to the party favourable to Syracuse, who immediately put them to death." Thucydid. p. 462. We shall see hereafter still more fatal consequences of his resentment against his country. But nothing can more strongly attest the turpitude of his character.

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which the madness of ambition had ever dared to entertain, injudiciously arrested the activity of that man in the execution of such extraordinary designs, as offered no chance of success but in the wonderful resources of his singular and eccentric genius. It happened, that on the night preceding the intended navigation to Sicily, all the statues of Mercury, which had been erected in the Athenian streets, as the boundaries of different edifices and tenements, were thrown down, broken, and defaced. One only image of the god, of uncommon size and beauty, was saved from the general wreck; it was afterwards called the statue of Andocides, as it stood before the house of the Athenian orator of that name. This daring insult was first ascribed to the wicked artifices of the Corinthians, who, it was supposed, might employ such an abominable and sacrilegious contrivance, to deter the Athenian armament from sailing against their colony and kinsmen of Syracuse. But the enemies of Alcibiades availed themselves of the impious levity[26] of his character, to direct the popular storm against the head of their detested foe. On the evidence of slaves, he was accused of having

The cause of his recall.

[26] Democritus, the chief promoter of the Atomic philosophy, was younger than Anaxagoras, and elder than Socrates. His scholars, Dingoras and Protagoras, propagated his wild system at Athens, towards the commencement of the Peloponnesian war. Whether Alcibiades embraced the barren doctrines of that miserable sect, or adhered to the divine philosophy of his master Socrates, or, more probably, fluctuated between them, he must, in all cases alike, have been obnoxious to the suspicion of impiety. Comp. Strabo, l. lxv. p. 703. Sext. Empiric. l. lix. 11. Laert. l. ii. in Democrit. Socrat. & Protag.

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treated, with rude familiarity, other adored images of the gods; and Thessalus, the degenerate son of the magnanimous Cimon, impeached him of impiety towards the goddesses Ceres and Proserpine, whose awful ceremonies he had polluted and profaned; assuming, though uninitiated, the names and robes of the high-priest, calling Polytion (in whose house this scandalous scene had been represented) the torch-bearer, Theodorus the herald, and treating his other licentious companions as sacred brethren and holy ministers of those mysterious rites.[27]

He is charged with impiety and treason. Olymp. xci. 2. A. C. 415.

Such an atrocious accusation alarmed the terrors of the Athenians; one assembly was summoned after another; and the panic became the more general, when it was understood that, during the same night in which the statues had been mutilated, a body of Peloponnesian troops had marched towads the isthmus of Corinth. In the confused imagination of the vulgar, it was possible to unite the incompatible interests of superstition and of freedom; and they were persuaded by Androcles, and other artful demagogues, that the profanation of the mysteries, the defacing of the statues of Mercury, the movement of the Peloponnesian troops, all announced a conspiracy to demolish the established form of popular government, the safety of which had, ever since the expulsion of the Pisistratidæ, formed an object of universal and most anxious solicitude.

[27] Plutarch. in Alcibiad.

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The artifices of his accusers.

Alcibiades defended himself, with his usual eloquence and address, against the malignity of a charge, unsupported by any adequate evidence. The soldiers and sailors, whose eagerness already grasped the conquest of Sicily, interceded for the deliverance of their commander, whom they regarded as the soul of that glorious enterprise. A thousand Argives and Mantinæans, who had enlisted on this occasion, under the Athenian banners, declared their unwillingness to sail, unless they were accompanied by Alcibiades, whose valour and abilities alone had determined them to engage in such an important, but dangerous service. This powerful combination in his favour disappointed the present hopes, without disconcerting the future measures of his enemies. They perceived that, were he brought to an immediate trial, it would be impossible to obtain sentence against him; but that, were his person and influence removed to a distance from Athens, every thing might be hoped from the weakness, inconstancy, and credulity of the populace. It was therefore determined by this perfidious cabal, that such orators as had hitherto disguised, under the mask of friendship or admiration, their envy and hatred of Alcibiades, should declare in full assembly, "That it would be inconsistent with the clearest dictates of prudence and propriety, to involve in the tedious formalities of a judicial procedure, a citizen who had been elected general by the unanimous suffrage of his country, and whose presence was eagerly demanded by the affectionate ardour of

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his troops. The charges against him deserved, doubtless, to be seriously examined; but the present was not a proper time for such an investigation which must blunt the courage of his followers, and interrupt the service of the republic. Let him sail, therefore, for Sicily, and at his return home he will either vindicate his innocence, or suffer the punishment of his guilt." Alcibiades perceived the poison concealed under this affected lenity, and testified his reluctance to leave behind him such abundant materials for the malice of informers. But his petition for an immediate trial was rejected by the assembly. He therefore set sail, probably flattering himself, that by the glory and success of his arms, he would silence the clamours, at least defeat the machinations of his accusers.

Favoured by popular delusion.

But this expectation was unfortunately disappointed. In a republican government, it is not more easy to excite, than it is difficult to appease, the fermentation of public discontents, especially if occasioned by any real or pretended diminution of freedom. The removal of Alcibiades gave full scope to the ebullitions of popular frenzy. The Athenians were continually assembled to enquire into the violation of the statues. Many respectable citizens were seized on suspicion, because they had, on former occasions, discovered principles hostile to the wild extravagance of democracy. Others were imprisoned on the evidence of Teucer, an obscure stranger, and Diopeithes, a calumnious demagogue. The violence of the public disorder

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opened a door to private vengeance. Every individual was desirous to see his personal enemies among the number of state criminals; and his resentment was invited falsely to accuse them, by an injudicious decree of the assembly, offering high rewards to those who should denounce the guilty, and even to the guilty themselves, who should denounce their associates.

Alcibiades escapes to Sparta. Olymp. xci. 2. A. C. 415.

Among the persons who had been seized on suspicion, was the crafty and intriguing Timæus, and the profligate and impious Andocides, the same whose statue of Mercury had escaped the general mutilation. The known character of these men naturally marked them out as peculiar victims of popular fury. As they were confined in the same prison, they had an opportunity of communicating their apprehensions, and of contriving means of safety. Timæus persuaded his friend (for the ties of common danger create between knaves a temporary friendship), that it would be weakness, to die by a false accusation, when he might save himself by a lie. Andocides turned informer. The prisoners whom he named were banished or put to death. The rest were set at liberty. The absent, among whom was Alcibiades, were recalled to stand trial. But they did not obey the summons sent them by the Salaminian galley. The wanderings and misfortunes of more obscure names are unknown. Alcibiades escaped to Thurium, and afterwards to Argos; and when he understood that the Athenians had set a price on his head, he finally took refuge in Sparta; where his active genius seized

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the first opportunity to advise and promote those fatal measures, which, while they gratified his private resentment, occasioned the ruin of his country.[28]

Languid operations in Sicily.

The removal of Alcibiades soon appeared in the languid operations of the Athenian armament. The cautious timidity of Nicias, supported by wealth, eloquence, and authority, gained an absolute ascendant over the more warlike and enterprising character of Lamachus, whose poverty exposed him to contempt. Instead of making a bold impression on Selinus or Syracuse, Nicias contented himself with taking possession of the unimportant colony of Hyccara. He ravaged, or laid under contribution some places of smaller note, and obtained thirty talents from the Ægesteans, which added to the sale of the booty, furnished about thirty thousand pounds sterling[29], a sum that might be usefully employed in the prosecution of an expensive war. But this advantage did not compensate for the courage inspired into the Syracusans by delay, and for the dishonour sustained by the Athenian troops, in their unsuccessful attempts against Hybla and Himera, as well as for their dejection

[28] Plut. in Alcibiad. & Isocrates, and Lysias, in the Orations for and against the son of Alcibiades. Several facts and circumstances are differently represented in the orations of Andocides; but that orator was a party concerned, and his misrepresentation of the best attested facts leaves him no credit in those that are more doubtful.

[29] Thirty talents from the Ægesteans, amount to - £5,812
The sale of slaves, &c. - - - - - 23,250

Sum £29,062

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at being confined, during the greatest part of the summer, in the inactive quarters of Naxos and Catana.

Nicias determines to attack Syracuse.

The impatience of the Athenians murmured against these dilatory and ignoble proceedings, which appeared altogether unsuited to the greatness of their armament, the generous spirit with which they felt themselves animated, and the ancient glory of the republic. Nicias, resisting the wary dictates of his own fear or foresight, determined to gratify the inclination of his troops, by the vigour of his winter campaign. The conquest of Syracuse, against which he intended to lead them, might well excite the emulation of the combatants, since that powerful city formed the main obstacle to their ambition, and the principal bulwark not only of Sicily, but of the Italian and African shores.

Description of that city.

Ancient Syracuse, of which the ruined grandeur is still worthy of regard, was situate on a spacious promontory, washed on three sides by the sea, and defended on the west by abrupt and almost inaccessible mountains. The town was built in a triangular form, whose summit may be conceived at the lofty mountains Epipolé. Adjacent to these natural fortifications, the western or inland division of the city was distinguished by the name of Tycha, or Fortune, being adorned by a magnificent temple of that flattering divinity. The triangle gradually widening towards the base, comprehended the vast extent of Achradina, reaching from the northern shore of the promontory to the southern island Ortygia. This small island, composing the whole of modern

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Syracuse, formed but the third and least extensive division of the ancient; which was fortified by walls eighteen miles in circuit, enriched by a triple harbour, and peopled by above two hundred thousand warlike citizens, or industrious slaves.[30]

Temper of the Syracusans.

When the Syracusans heard the first rumours of the Athenian invasion, they despised, or affected to despise them, as idle lies invented to amuse the ignorance of the populace. The hostile armament had arrived at Rhegium before they could be persuaded, by the wisdom of Hermocrates, to provide against a danger which their presumption painted as imaginary. But when they received undoubted intelligence that the enemy had reached the Italian coast; when they beheld his numerous fleet commanding the sea of Sicily, and ready to make a descent on their defenceless island, they were seized with a degree of just terror and alarm proportional to their false security. They condemned their former incredulity and indifference, which had been nourished by the interested adulation of the demagogue Athenagoras, who vainly assured them that the strength of Syracuse was sufficient not only to defy the assaults, but to restrain the attempts, of any Grecian foe. From the heights of presumption, they plunged into the depths of despair, and their spirits were, with difficulty, restored by the animating voice of Hermocrates, who was not more prudent in prosperity than intrepid in danger.[31]

[30] Strabo, p. 266, et seq. & Thucydid. passim. l. vi.

[31] Thucydid. p. 436, et seq.

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By *his* exhortations they were encouraged to make ready their arms, to equip their fleet, to strengthen their garrisons, and to summon the assistance of their allies. These measures were undertaken with ardour, and carried on with unremitting activity; and the dilatory operations of the enemy not only removed the recent terror and trepidation of the Syracusans, but inspired them with unusual firmness. They requested the generals, whom they had appointed to the number of fifteen, to lead them to Catana, that they might attack the hostile camp. Their cavalry harassed the Athenians by frequent incursions, beat up their quarters, intercepted their convoys, destroyed their advanced posts, and even proceeded so near to the main body, that they were distinctly heard demanding with loud insults, Whether those boasted lords of Greece had left their native country, that they might form a precarious settlement at the foot of Mount [32] Ætna?

They insult the Athenians.

Provoked by these indignities, and excited by the impatient resentment of his own troops, Nicias was still restrained from an open attack on Syracuse by the difficulties attending that enterprise. The distance between Catana and the Sicilian capital was more than thirty miles; but, after the most prosperous voyage, the Athenians could not expect, without extreme danger, to make a descent on the fortified coast of a power-

Stratagem of Nicias for getting possession of Syracuse.

[32] Plutarch. The sneer is differently expressed in Thucydides; "Whether they had not come to gain a settlement for themselves in a *foreign* country, rather than to replace the Leontines in *their own*?" Thucydid. p. 455.

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ful and vigilant enemy. If they determined to march by land, they must be harassed by the numerous cavalry of Syracuse, which actually watched their motions, and with whose activity, in a broken and intricate country, the strength of heavy-armed troops was exceedingly ill-qualified to contend. To avoid both inconveniences, Nicias employed a stratagem. A citizen of Catana, whose subtle and daring genius, prepared alike to die or to deceive, ought to have preserved his name from oblivion, appeared in Syracuse as a deserter from his native city; the unhappy fate of which, in being subjected to the imperious commands, or licentious disorder of the Athenians, he lamented with perfidious tears, and with the plaintive accents of well-dissembled sorrow. "*He* was not the only man who bewailed, with filial compassion, the misfortunes and ignominy of his country. A numerous body of Cataneans, whose resentment was repressed by fear, longed to take up arms, that they might deliver themselves from a disgraceful yoke, and punish the cruel tyranny of the invaders. Nor could the design fail of success, if Syracuse should second their generous ardour. The Athenians, so liberally endowed with courage and ambition, were destitute of wisdom and of discipline. They spurned the restraints of a military life; their posts were forsaken, their ships unguarded; they disdained the duties of the camp, and indulged in the pleasures of the city. On an appointed day it would be easy for the Syracusans, assisted

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by the conspirators of Catana, to attack them unprepared, to mount their undefended ramparts, to demolish their encampment, and to burn their fleet." This daring proposal well corresponded with the keen sentiments of revenge which animated the inhabitants of Syracuse. The day was named; the plan of the enterprise was concerted, and the treacherous Catanean returned home to revive the hopes, and to confirm the resolution of his pretended associates.

Fails through the activity of the Syracusans.

The success of this intrigue gave the utmost satisfaction to Nicias, whose armament prepared to sail for Syracuse on the day appointed by the inhabitants of that city for assaulting, with their whole force, the Athenian camp. Already had they marched with this view, to the fertile plain of Leontium, when, after twelve hours' sail, the Athenian fleet arrived in the great harbour, disembarked their troops, and fortified a camp without the western wall, near to the celebrated temple of Olympian Jupiter; a situation which had been pointed out by some Syracusan exiles, and which was well adapted to every purpose of accommodation and defence. Meanwhile the cavalry of Syracuse, proceeding to the walls of Catana, had discovered to their infinite regret, the departure of the Athenians. The unwelcome intelligence was conveyed, with the utmost expedition, to the infantry, who immediately marched back to protect Syracuse. The rapid return of the warlike youth restored the courage of the aged Syracusans. They were joined by the forces of Gela, Selinus, and Camarina; and

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it was determined, without loss of time, to attack the hostile encampment. [33]

Nicias defeats the Syracusans in a battle. Olymp. xci. 2. A. C. 415.

Only a few days elapsed before the Athenians gave them a fairer opportunity of revenge. The two armies prepared to engage, respectively inflamed by resentment and ambition; the one formidable from courage and numbers, the other elated by superior discipline and habitual victory. The Syracusan generals drew up their troops, sixteen, and the Athenians only eight, deep: but the latter had, in their camp, a body of reserve, which was kept ready for action on the first signal. Nicias went round the ranks, exhorting his soldiers by a short discourse, in which he observed, "that the strength of their present preparations was better fitted to inspire confidence, than the most eloquent speech with a weak army, especially as they contended against the Syracusans, a promiscuous crowd, whose presumption was founded on inexperience, and whose desultorious ardour, however successful in predatory incursions, would yield to the first shock of regular war. They fought, indeed, in defence of their city; so did the Athenians and their allies, whom nothing but military valour and success could restore in safety to their respective countries." [34] Having thus spoken, he led his troops to the enemy, who did not decline the engagement. The light-armed archers [35] skirmished in

[33] Thucydid. p. 445—457.

[34] Thucydid. p. 458 & 459.

[35] Thucydides mentions, besides the archers (τοξοται), the λιθοβολοι and σφενδονηται, "the throwers of stones and slingers." p. 449. They were all ψιλοι, as he says immediately below.

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the van: the priests brought forth the accustomed sacrifices: the trumpets sounded for a general charge.

Cause of their defeat.

The attack was begun with fury, and continued with perseverance for several hours. Both sides were animated by every principle that can inspire and urge the utmost vigour of exertion, and victory was still doubtful, when a tempest suddenly arose, accompanied with unusual peals of thunder. This event, which little affected the Athenians, confounded the unexperienced credulity of the enemy, who were broken and put to flight. Nicias restrained the eagerness of his men in the pursuit, lest they should be exposed to danger from a body of twelve hundred Syracusan cavalry, who had not engaged in the battle, but who impatiently watched an opportunity to assault the disordered phalanx. The Syracusans escaped to their city, and the Athenians returned to their camp. In such an obstinate conflict, the vanquished lost two hundred and sixty, the victors only fifty men; numbers that might occasion much surprise, if we reflected not that, to oppose the offensive weapons used by antiquity, the warriors of Greece (in every circumstance so unlike the miserable and naked peasants of modern Europe, whose lives are sacrificed without defence, as without remorse, to the ambition of men whom the Greeks would have styled tyrants) being armed with the helmet and cuirass, the ample buckler, the firm corselet, and the manly greaves, they often displayed their skill, their courage,

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and their love of liberty, at a very small expense of human blood.

The Athenians return to Catana and Naxos.

The voyage, the encampment, and the battle, employed the dangerous activity, and gratified the impetuous order of the Athenians, but did not facilitate the conquest of Syracuse. Without more powerful preparations, Nicias despaired of taking the place, either by assault, or by a regular siege. Soon after his victory, he returned with the whole armament to Naxos and Catana; a measure which sufficiently proves that the late enterprise had been undertaken, not in consequence of any permanent system of operations formed by the general, but in compliance with the ungovernable[36] temper of his troops, whose principles of military subordination were confined to the field of battle.

[36] Without attending to this circumstance, the conduct of Grecian generals must, on many occasions, appear altogether unaccountable. The same observation applies to modern history preceding the peace of Munster. The famous war of thirty years, which ended at that peace, laid the great foundation for the exact military subordination which distinguishes the present century. See Pere Bougeant, Histoire de la Guerre de 30 Ans.

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Preparations for the ensuing Campaign. — The Athenians begin the Siege with Vigour. — Distress and Sedition in Syracuse. — Arrival of Gylippus — who defeats the Athenians. — Transactions in Greece: — A second Armament arrives at Syracuse: — Its first Operations successful. — The Athenians defeated. — Prepare to raise the Siege. — Naval Engagement in the Great Harbour. Despondency of the Athenians. — Stratagem of Hermocrates. — The Athenians raise their Camp. — Melancholy Firmness of Nicias. — Demosthenes capitulates. — Nicias surrenders. — Cruel Treatment of the Athenian Captives. — Singular Exception.

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Nicias prepares for the ensuing campaign. Olymp. xci. 2. A. C. 416.

NICIAS had reason to hope that his victory over the Syracusans would procure him respect and assistance from the inferior states of Sicily. His emissaries were diffused over that island and the neighbouring coast of Italy. Messengers were sent to Tuscany, where Pisa and other cities had been founded by Greek colonies.[1] An embassy was dispatched to Carthage, the rival and enemy of Syracuse. Nicias gave orders to collect materials for circumvallation; iron, bricks, and all necessary stores. He demanded horses from

[1] Strabo, p. 243. & p. 283. et seq.

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the Ægesteans; and required from Athens reinforcements, and a large pecuniary supply; neglecting nothing that might enable him to open the ensuing campaign with vigour and effect.[2]

The Syracusans prepare for defence.

While the Athenians thus prepared for the attack of Syracuse, the citizens of that capital displayed equal activity in providing for their own defence. By the advice of Hermocrates, they appointed *himself*, Heraclides, and Sicanus; three, instead of fifteen generals. The commanders newly elected, both in civil and military affairs, were invested with unlimited power, which was usefully employed to purchase or prepare arms, daily to exercise the troops, and to strengthen and extend the fortifications of Syracuse. They likewise dispatched ambassadors to the numerous cities and republics with which they had been connected in peace, or allied in war, to solicit the continuance of their friendship, and to counteract the dangerous designs of the Athenians.

Both parties court the friendship of the Camerineans. Olymp. xci. 2. A. C. 415.

The importance of the city Camerina, situate on the southern coast of Sicily, demanded the presence of Hermocrates himself. The Camerineans had given a very feeble and reluctant assistance to their allies of Syracuse; and the orator Euphemus employed all the weight of his

[2] It is remarkable, that though Nicias, after the removal of Alcibiades, enjoyed the principal, or rather sole command of the army, he acted quite contrary to the opinion which he had declared at the commencement of the expedition. The plan which he pursued was that of Alcibiades, not his own: the views of the banished general still actuated the army; but the ardent spirit was withdrawn, that could alone afford the hope of success.

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Arguments of the Syracusans.

abilities to unite them to the Athenian confederacy. An assembly being summoned, Hermocrates informed them, "That a desire to prevent the deception of the Camerineans, not the dread of the Athenian power, had occasioned his present journey. That restless and ambitious nation, which had so often kindled the flames of war on the continent of Greece, had lately sailed to Sicily, under pretence of re-establishing the affairs of the Leontines and Ægesteans, but from motives far more selfish, which it was easy to conjecture and impossible to mistake. Their real and principal design was to sow dissension and disagreement among the Sicilian states, which, fighting singly, might be successively subdued. How could effrontery affirm, or simplicity believe, that the Athenians should undertake a voyage to vindicate the freedom of Ægesta; they who oppressed, with all the rigours of slavery, the unhappy islanders of Eubœa, by whom Ægesta had been built, and from whom its inhabitants were descended! Under pretence of delivering from the tyranny of the Great King, the Greeks of Asia, of the Hellespont, of Thrace, and of the Ægæan, they had conquered and enslaved those various countries. They actually employed the same perfidious contrivance against the safety of the Sicilians; but he trusted that their present undertaking, though carried on with equal artifice, would be attended with very different success; and that they would learn, by fatal experience, to distinguish between the effeminate Ionians and Hellespontines, whose minds had been enfeebled and debased by the Persian yoke,

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and the magnanimous Dorians of Sicily, the genuine offspring of Peloponnesus, the source of valour and of liberty."[3]

Of the Athenians.

Euphemus, the Athenian, repelled with force and spirit these reproachful accusations. "The colonies of Athens were kept in a dependence, not less advantageous to themselves than honourable to the parent state. The general interest of Greece required that the same republic which at first had so bravely established, should still continue to maintain, the national independence. They who afford protection, must assume authority; but this authority the Athenians had exerted in a manner essential to their own and to the public safety. If they had subjected the neighbouring coasts and islands, their *interest* might justify that odious but necessary measure; and the same dictates of sound policy which induced them to conquer and to enslave the Hellespontine and Asiatic Greeks, would engage them to emancipate and to deliver the oppressed Sicilians. To this office they were invited by the Leontines and Ægestæans; to this duty they were prompted by the ties of friendship and consanguinity: to this enterprise they were determined by the strongest of all motives, a well-grounded fear lest the inhabitants of Sicily (whose numbers and distance rendered it impossible for Athens to subdue, far less to retain them in subjection) should fall a prey to the watchful encroachments of Syracuse, and thus become an accession to the Peloponnesian confederacy."

[3] Thucydid. l. vi. p. 463. et seq.

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The Camerineans dreaded the distant ambition of Athens, but dreaded still more the neighbouring hostility of Syracuse. Their fears dictated a reply in friendly and respectful terms; but they craved leave to preserve a neutrality between the contending powers, hoping, by this expedient, to divert the resentment of either, yet to defeat the designs of both.

The Camerineans determine to observe neutrality.

Meanwhile the expected reinforcements arrived from Athens. In addition to his original force, Nicias had likewise collected a body of six hundred cavalry, and the sum of four hundred talents; and, in the eighteenth summer of the war, the activity of the troops and workmen had completed all necessary preparations for undertaking the siege of Syracuse. The Athenian armament enjoyed a prosperous voyage to the northern harbour of Trogilé, and the troops were no sooner disembarked than they seized an opportunity for signalising their valour against a body of seven hundred men, who marched to reinforce the garrison of Labdalus; an important fortress situate on the highest of the mountains which overlook and command the city. Three hundred Syracusans were killed in the pursuit; the rest took refuge behind their walls; the castle of Labdalus was taken, and strongly guarded by the victors. The plan which Nicias embraced for conquering the city, was to draw a wall on either side from the neighbourhood of Labdalus, towards the port of Trogilé on the north, and towards a bay two leagues in circumference, justly called the Great Harbour, on the south. When these circumvallations had surrounded the

The Athenians are reinforced, and begin the siege with vigour. Olymp. xci. 3. A. C. 414.

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place by land, he expected, by his numerous fleet, to block up the wide extent of the Syracusan harbours. The whole strength of the Athenian armament was vigorously directed to this service; and, as all necessary materials had been provided with due attention, the works rose with a rapidity which surprised and terrified the besieged. Their former, as well as their recent defeat, deterred them from opposing the enemy in a general engagement; but the advice of Hermocrates persuaded them to raise walls, which might traverse and interrupt those of the Athenians.[4] The imminent danger urged the activity of the workmen; the hostile bulwarks approached each other; frequent skirmishes ensued, in one of which the brave Lamachus unfortunately fell a victim to his rash valour[5]; but the Athenian troops maintained their usual superiority.

Distress and sedition in Syracuse.

Encouraged by success, Nicias pushed the enemy with vigour. The Syracusans lost hopes of defending their new works, or of preventing the complete circumvallation of their city; and this despair was encreased by the abundant supplies which arrived from all quarters to the besiegers, while the interest of Syracuse seemed to be universally abandoned by the indifference or cowardice of her allies. In the turbulent democracies of Greece, the moment of public danger commonly gave the signal for domestic sedition. The populace clamoured with their usual licentiousness, against the incapacity or perfidy of

[4] Thucydid. l. vi. p. 482. et seq. [5] Plutarch. in Nicia.

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their leaders, to whom alone they ascribed their misfortunes. New generals were named in the room of Hermocrates and his colleagues; and this injudicious change increased the calamities of Syracuse, which at length prepared to capitulate. [6]

The Syracusans unexpectedly relieved by their Peloponnesian allies. Olymp. xci. 3. A. C. 414.

While the assembly deliberated concerning the execution of a measure, which, however disgraceful, was declared to be necessary, a Corinthian galley, commanded by Gongylus, entered the central harbour of Ortygia, which being strongly fortified, and penetrating into the heart of the city, served as the principal and most secure station for the Syracusan fleet. The news immediately reached the assembly, and all ranks of men eagerly crowded around Gongylus the Corinthian, that they might learn the cause of his voyage, and the intentions of their Peloponnesian allies. Gongylus announced a speedy and effectual relief to the besieged city. [7] He acquainted the Syracusans, that the embassy, sent the preceding year, to crave the assistance of Peloponnesus, had been crowned with success. His own countrymen had warmly embraced the cause of their kinsmen, and most respectable colony. They had fitted out a considerable fleet, the arrival of which might be expected every hour. The Lacedæmonians, also, had sent a small squadron, and the whole armament was conducted by the Spartan Gylippus, an officer of tried valour and ability.

Arrival of the Spartan Gylippus,

While the desponding citizens of Syracuse listened to this intelligence with pleasing asto-

[6] Thucydid. p. 487.

[7] Id. p. 490.

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nishment, a messenger arrived by land from Gylippus himself. That experienced commander, instead of pursuing a direct course to Sicily, which might have been intercepted by the Athenian fleet, had landed with four gallies on the western coast of the island. The name of a Spartan general determined the wavering irresolution of the Sicilians. The troops of Himera, Selinus, and Gela, flocked to his standard; and he approached Syracuse on the side of Epipolé, where the line of contravallation was still unfinished, with a body of several thousand men.

who defeats the Athenians.

The most courageous of the citizens sallied forth to meet this generous and powerful protector. The junction was happily effected; the ardour of the troops kindled into enthusiasm; and they distinguished that memorable day by surprising several important Athenian posts. This first success re-animated the activity of the soldiers and workmen. The traverse wall was extended with the utmost diligence, and a vigorous sally deprived the enemy of the strong castle of Labdalus. Nicias perceiving that the interest of the Athenians in Sicily would be continually weakened by delay, wished to bring the fortune of the war to the decision of a battle. Nor did Gylippus decline the engagement. The first action was unfavourable to the Syracusans, who had been imprudently posted in the defiles between their own and the enemy's walls, which rendered of no avail their superiority in cavalry and archers. The magnanimity of Gylippus acknowledged this error, for which he completely atoned by his judicious conduct in the imme-

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diately succeeding engagement. His forces were drawn up in a more spacious ground. The pikemen received the shock of the enemy's front. The horses and light-armed troops assailed and harassed their undefended flanks. The Athenians were thrown into disorder, repulsed, and pursued to their camp with considerable loss, and with irreparable disgrace.

Consequences of the victory.

The important consequences of this victory appeared in the subsequent events of the siege. The Syracusans soon extended their works beyond the line of circumvallation, so that it was impossible to block up their city, without forcing their ramparts. The besiegers, while they maintained the superiority of their arms, had been abundantly supplied with necessaries from the neighbouring territory; but every place was alike hostile to them after their defeat. The soldiers, who went out in quest of wood and water, were unexpectedly attacked and cut off by the enemy's cavalry, or by the reinforcements which arrived from every quarter to the assistance of Syracuse; and they were at length reduced to depend, for every necessary supply, on the precarious bounty of the Italian shore.

Nicias demands a reinforcement from Athens.

Nicias, whose sensibility deeply felt the public distress, wrote a most desponding letter to the Athenians. He honestly described, and lamented, the misfortunes and disorders of his army. The slaves deserted in great numbers; the mercenary troops, who fought only for pay and subsistence, preferred the more secure and lucrative service of Syracuse; even the Athe-

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nian citizens, disgusted with the unexpected length and intolerable hardships of the war, abandoned the care of the galleys to unexperienced hands; an abuse too easily permitted by the captains, whose weakness and partiality had corrupted the discipline, and ruined the strength, of the fleet. Nicias frankly acknowledged his inability to check the disorder; observing, that he wrote to those who knew the difficulty of governing the licentious spirit of their domestic troops. He therefore exhorted the assembly, either to call them home without delay, or to send immediately a second armament, not less powerful than the first.

Naval operations. Olymp. xci. 4. A. C. 413.

Gylippus and Hermocrates (for the latter had again assumed the authority due to his abilities) were acquainted with the actual distress, as well as the future hopes of the besiegers, who might derive, in consequence of Nicias's letter, more effectual succours from Attica than the besieged city could expect from Peloponnesus. They were prompted by interest, therefore, as well as by inclination, to press the enemy on every side, and at once to assail them by sea and land. Besides the bad condition of the Athenian fleet, the absence of a considerable number of galleys employed in conducting the convoys of provisions, encouraged this resolution. The Corinthian squadron of twelve sail, long expected with anxiety, had escaped the dangers of a winter's voyage; and at the commencement of the ensuing spring, the harbours of Syracuse were crowded with the whole naval strength of

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Sicily. Hermocrates persuaded his countrymen, "that the advantages of skill and experience, which he honestly ascribed to the Athenians, could not compensate their terror and confusion at being suddenly attacked by a superior force, on an element which they affected to command. Athens had assumed this boasted empire of the sea in repelling the invasion of Persia. Syracuse had a similar, yet stronger motive; and as she possessed greater power, was entitled to expect more distinguished success." CHAP. XX.

Alternate success.

The principal squadrons of Syracuse lay in the harbour of Ortygia, separated by the island of that name, from the station of the Athenian fleet. While Hermocrates sailed forth with eighty galleys, to venture a naval engagement, Gylippus attacked the hostile fortifications at Plemmyrium, a promontory opposite to Ortygia, which confined the entrance of the Great Harbour. The defeat of the Syracusans at sea, whereby they lost fourteen vessels, was balanced by their victory at land, in which they took three fortresses, containing a large quantity of military and naval stores, and a considerable sum of money. In some subsequent actions, which scarcely deserve the name of battles, their fleet was still unsuccessful; but as they engaged with great caution, and found every where a secure retreat on a friendly shore, their loss was inconsiderable. Their want of success, in their first attempt, did not abate their resolution to gain the command at sea. The hopes of defending their country sharpened their invention, and animated their

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activity. They could not, indeed, contend with the Athenians in the rapidity of naval evolution, or in the skill of seamanship; but in the destined scene of action, there was little opportunity for displaying those advantages; and by strengthening, with unremitting labour, the prows of their ships, they compensated, by superior weight, the defect of velocity. They provided also a great number of small vessels, which might approach so near the hostile fleet, that the light-armed troops with which they were filled could aim their darts against the Athenian mariners.

The Athenians defeated at sea.

By unexampled assiduity in completing these preparations, the Syracusans at length prevailed in a general engagement, which was fought in the Great Harbour. Seven Athenian ships were sunk, many more were disabled, and Nicias saved the remains of his shattered and dishonoured armament, by retiring behind a line of merchantmen and transports, from the masts of which had been suspended huge masses of lead, named dolphins, from their form, sufficient to crush, by their falling weight, the stoutest galleys of antiquity. This unexpected obstacle arrested the progress of the victors; but their preceding advantages elevated them with the highest hopes, and reduced the vanquished to despair.

Transactions in Greece. Olymp. xci. 3. A. C. 414.

The Athenian misfortunes in Sicily were attended by misfortunes at home still more dreadful. In the eighteenth year of the war, Alcibiades accompanied to Sparta the ambassadors of Corinth and Syracuse, who had solicited and obtained assistance to the besieged city. On that

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occasion, the Athenian exile first acquired the confidence of the Spartans, by condemning, in the strongest terms, the injustice and ambition of his ungrateful countrymen, "whose cruelty towards himself equalled their inveterate hostility to the Lacedæmonian republic; but this republic might, by following his advice, disarm their resentment. The town of Decelia was situate on the Attic frontier, at an equal distance of fifteen miles from Thebes and Athens. This place, which commanded an extensive and fertile plain, might be surprised and fortified by the Spartans[8], who, instead of harassing their foes by annual excursions, might thus infest them by a continual war. The wisdom of Sparta had too long neglected such a salutary and decisive measure, especially as the existence of a similar design had often been suggested by the fears of the enemy, who trembled even at the apprehension of seeing a foreign garrison in their territory.

The Peloponnesians raise a fortress in Attica. Olymp. xci. 4. A. C. 415.

This advice, first proposed, and often urged, by Alcibiades, was adopted in the commencement of the ensuing spring, when the warlike Agis led a powerful army into Attica. The defenceless inhabitants of the frontier fled before his irresistible arms; but instead of pursuing them, as usual, into the heart of the country, he stopped short at Decelia. As all necessary materials had been provided in great abundance,

[8] The Athenians, with their usual imprudence, facilitated the success of Alcibiades's intrigues. At the time when they ought, if possible, to have soothed, they exasperated the Spartans to the utmost, by frequent incursions from Pylus, and by openly assisting the Argives. Thucydid. l. vi. sub fine.

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the place was speedily fortified on every side, and the walls of Decelia, which might be distinctly seen across the intermediate plain, bid defiance to those of Athens.[9]

The miserable state of that country.

The latter city was kept in continual alarm by the watchful hostility of a neighbouring garrison. The open country was entirely laid waste, and the usual communication was interrupted with the valuable island of Eubœa, from which, in seasons of scarcity, or during the ravages of war, the Athenians commonly derived their supplies of corn, wine, and oil, and whatever is most necessary to life. Harassed by the fatigues of unremitting service, and deprived of daily bread, the slaves murmured, complained, and revolted to the enemy; and their defection robbed the state of twenty thousand useful artisans. Since the latter years of Pericles, the Athenians had not been involved in such distress. But their present were far more grievous than their past sufferings. Those had been chiefly occasioned by the temporary rage of the pestilence, the abatement of which there was always reason to expect; but these were inflicted by the unextinguishable hatred of a cruel and unrelenting foe.[10]

The Athenians exert great vigour in the midst of their calamities.

The domestic calamities of the republic did not, however, prevent the most vigorous exertions abroad. Twenty galleys, stationed at Naupactus, watched the motions of the Peloponnesian fleet destined to the assistance of Syracuse: thirty carried on the war in Macedonia,

[9] Thucydid. p. 500. et seq.

[10] Id. ibid.

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to reduce the rebellion of Amphipolis; a considerable squadron collected tribute, and levied soldiers, in the colonies of Asia; another, still more powerful, ravaged the coast of Peloponnesus. Never did any kingdom or republic equal the magnanimity of Athens; never, in ancient or modern times, did the courage of any state entertain an ambition so far superior to its power, or exert efforts so disproportionate to its strength. Amidst the difficulties and dangers which encompassed them on every side, the Athenians persisted in the siege of Syracuse, a city little inferior to their own; and, undaunted by the actual devastation of their country, unterrified by the menaced assault of their walls, they sent, without delay, such a reinforcement into Sicily, as afforded the most promising hopes of success in their expedition against that island. [11]

The Athenian armament, commanded by Demosthenes, arrives at Syracuse. Olymp. xci. 4. A. C. 415.

The Syracusans had scarcely time to rejoice at their victory, or Nicias to bewail his defeat, when a numerous and formidable armament appeared on the Sicilian coast. The foremost gallies, their prows adorned with gaudy streamers, pursued a secure course towards the harbours of Syracuse. The emulation of the rowers was animated by the mingled sounds of the trumpet and clarion; and the regular decoration, the elegant splendour, which distinguished every part of the equipment, exhibited a pompous spectacle of naval triumph. Their appearance, even at a distance, announced the country to which

[11] Thucydid. p. 501. et seq.

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they belonged; and both the joy of the besiegers, and the terror of the besieged, acknowledged that Athens was the only city in the world capable of sending to the sea such a beautiful and magnificent contribution. The Syracusans employed not unavailing efforts to check the progress, or to hinder the approach, of the hostile armament; which, besides innumerable foreign vessels and transports, consisted of seventy-three Athenian gallies, commanded by the experienced valour of Demosthenes and Eurymedon. The pikemen on board exceeded five thousand; the light-armed troops were nearly as numerous; and, including the rowers, workmen, and attendants, the whole strength may be reckoned superior to that originally sent with Nicias [12], which amounted to twenty thousand men.

The combined forces assault Syracuse.

The misfortunes hitherto attending the operations in Sicily had lowered the character of the general; and this circumstance, as well as the superior abilities of Demosthenes, entitled him to assume the tone of authority in their conjunct deliberations. His advice, which Eurymedon highly approved, and in which the dilatory caution of Nicias finally acquiesced, was clear and simple. "They ought to avail themselves of the alarm which the unexpected arrival of such a powerful reinforcement had spread among the enemy; and instead of submitting to the tedious formalities of a siege, at once assault the walls of Syracuse. He trusted, by the valour of his

[12] Comp. Thucydid. supra citat. Diodor. l. xiii. p. 286. Plut. in Nicia.

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troops, to obtain, in one day, the valuable reward of long and severe labours. But if the gods had otherwise determined, it would be time to desist from an enterprise, in which delay was equal to defeat, and to employ the bravery of the Athenian youth in repelling the invaders of their country."[13]

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Their first operations successful.

After ravaging the banks of the Anapus, and making some ineffectual attempts against the fortifications on that side, probably with a view to divert the attention of the enemy, Demosthenes chose the first hour of a moonshine night, to proceed with the flower of the army to seize the fortresses in Epipolæ. The march was performed with successful celerity; the out-posts were surprised; the guards put to the sword; and three separate encampments, of the Syracusans, the Sicilians, and allies, formed a feeble opposition to the Athenian ardour. As if their victory had already been complete, the assailants began to pull down the wooden battlements, or to urge the pursuit with a rapidity which disordered their ranks.

A general engagement, in which the Athenians are defeated.

Meanwhile, the vigilant activity of Gylippus had assembled the whole force of Syracuse. At the approach of the enemy his vanguard retired. The Athenians were decoyed within the intricate windings of the walls, and their irregular fury was first checked by the firmness of a Theban phalanx. A resistance so sudden and unexpected might alone have been decisive; but other

[13] Thucydid. l. vii. p. 519.

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circumstances were adverse to the Athenians; their ignorance of the ground, the alternate obscurity of night and the deceitful glare of the moon, which, shining in the front of the Thebans, illumined the splendour of their arms, and multiplied the terror of their numbers. The foremost ranks of the pursuers were repelled; and, as they retreated to the main body, encountered the advancing Argives and Corcyreans, who singing the Pœan in their Doric dialect and accent, were unfortunately taken for enemies. Fear, and then rage, seized the Athenians, who thinking themselves encompassed on all sides, determined to force their way, and committed much bloodshed among their allies, before the mistake could be discovered. To prevent the repetition of this dreadful error, their scattered bands were obliged at every moment to demand the watch-word, which was at length betrayed to their adversaries. The consequence of this was doubly fatal. At every rencounter the silent Athenians were slaughtered without mercy, while the enemy, who knew their watch-word, might at pleasure join, or decline the battle, and easily oppress their weakness, or elude their strength. The terror and confusion increased; the rout became general. Gylippus pursued in good order with his victorious troops. The vanquished could not descend in a body by the narrow passages through which they had mounted. Many abandoned their arms, and explored the unknown paths of the rocky Epipolé. Others threw themselves from precipices, rather than await the pursuers. Several thousands were left dead or wounded on

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the scene of action; and, in the morning, the greater part of the stragglers were intercepted and cut off by the Syracusan cavalry.[14]

The salutary measures, proposed by Demosthenes, prevented by Nicias.

This dreadful and unexpected disaster suspended the operations of the siege. The Athenian generals spent the time in fruitless deliberations concerning their future measures, while the army lay encamped on the marshy and unhealthy banks of the Anapus. The vicissitudes of an autumnal atmosphere, corrupted by the foul vapours of an unwholesome soil, made a severe impression on the irritable fibres of men, exhausted by fatigue, dejected by disgrace, and deprived of hope. A general sickness broke out in the camp. Demosthenes urged this calamity as a new reason for hastening their departure, while it was yet possible to cross the Ionian sea, without risking the danger of a winter's tempest. But Nicias dissuaded the design of leaving Sicily until they should be warranted to take this important step by the positive authority of the republic. "Those who were actually the most bent on ignominious flight, would, after their return, be the foremost to accuse the weakness or the treachery of their commanders; and for his own part, he would rather die honourably in the field of battle, than perish by the unjust sentence of his country." Demosthenes and Eurymedon knew, by fatal experience, the irascible temper of an Athenian assembly; they only insisted, that the armament should at least remove

[14] Thucydid. p. 520. et seq.

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to a more convenient station, from whence, after the troops had recovered their usual health and spirits, they might harass the enemy by continual descents, until they obtained an opportunity of fighting the Syracusan fleet on the open sea.

His motives.

But even this resolution was strenuously opposed by Nicias, who knew by the secret correspondence which he maintained with certain traitors in Syracuse, that the treasury of that city had been exhausted by the enormous expense of two thousand talents already incurred in the war, and that the magistrates had stretched their credit to its utmost bounds, in borrowing from their allies; and who therefore naturally flattered himself, that the vigour of their resistance would abate with the decay of their resources. The colleagues of Nicias were confounded with the firmness of an opposition so unlike the yielding timidity of his ordinary character, and so inconsistent with the sentiments which he had often expressed concerning the Sicilian expedition. They imagined that he might rely on some more important ground of confidence, which his caution was unwilling to explain; they submitted therefore to his opinion, an opinion equally fatal to himself and to them, and to the armament which they commanded.[15]

The Syracusans receive a reinforcement.

Meanwhile, the prudence of Gylippus profited of the fame of his victory, to draw a powerful reinforcement from the Sicilian cities; and the transports, so long expected from Peloponnesus,

[15] Comp. Thucydid. p. 524. & Plut. in Nicia.

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finally arrived in the harbour of Ortygia. The Peloponnesian forces had sailed from Greece early in the spring; and it is not explained for what reason they touched on the coast of Cyrenaica. There they continued for some months, that they might defend their Grecian brethren, actually endangered by the impetuous assaults of the Lybians; and having conquered that barbarous enemy, they augmented their fleet with a few Cyrenian gallies [16], and safely reached Syracuse, the place of their first destination. This squadron formed the last assistance sent to either of the contending parties, and nothing farther was required to complete the actors in the following dreadful scene; for by the accession of the Cyrenians, Syracuse was either attacked or defended by all the various divisions of the Grecian name, which formed, in that age, the most civilized portion of the inhabitants of Asia, Africa, and Europe. CHAR. XX.

The arrival of such powerful auxiliaries to the besieged, and the increasing force of the malady, totally disconcerted the Athenians. Even Nicias agreed to set sail. Every necessary preparation was made for this purpose, and the cover of night was chosen, as most proper for concealing their own disgrace, and for eluding the vengeance of the enemy. But the night appointed for their departure was distinguished by an inauspicious eclipse of the moon, for so at least it was judged by the superstitious fears of Nicias, and by the The Athenians prepare to raise the siege.

[16] Thucydid. p. 537.

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ignorance of his diviners[17], even in the vain art which they professed. The voyage was deferred till the mystical number of thrice nine days. But, before the expiration of that time, it was no longer practicable, for the design was soon betrayed to the Syracusans; and this discovery, added to the encouragement derived from the circumstances of which we have already taken notice, increased their eagerness to attack the enemy by sea and land. Their attempts failed to destroy, by fire-ships, the Athenian fleet. They were more successful in employing superior numbers to divide the strength, and to weaken the resistance, of an enfeebled and dejected foe. During three days, there was a perpetual succession of battles, military and naval. On the first day fortune hung in suspense; the second deprived the Athenians of a considerable squadron commanded by Eurymedon; and this misfortune was embittered, on the third, by the loss of eighteen gallies, with their crews.[18]

Their purpose opposed by the enemy;

The Syracusans celebrated their victory with triumphant enthusiasm; while their orators "extolled and magnified the glory of a city, which, by its native prowess and single danger, had not only maintained the independence of Sicily, but avenged the injuries of the whole Grecian name, too long dishonoured and afflicted by the oppressive tyranny of Athens. This tyranny had been

[17] The rules of divination, we are told, should have taught them, that the obscurity of an eclipse betokened a successful retreat. Plutarch. in Nicia.

[18] Thucydid. p. 528. et seq.

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acquired and confirmed by the usurped sovereignty of the sea; but even on that element, the courage of Syracuse had defeated the experience of the enemy. Their renown would be immortal, if they accomplished the useful and meritorious work; and if, by intercepting the retreat, and destroying the armament of the Athenians, they crushed at once the power, and for ever humbled the pride, of that aspiring people." CHAP. XX.

who throw a chain across the Great Harbour.

This design, suggested by the wisdom of Hermocrates, was eagerly adopted by the active zeal of his fellow-citizens, who strove, with unremitting ardour, to throw a chain of vessels across the mouth of the Great Harbour, about a mile in breadth. The labour was complete before Nicias, totally occupied by other objects, attempted to interrupt it. After repeated defeats, and although he was so miserably tormented by the stone, that he had frequently solicited his recall, that virtuous commander, whose courage rose in adversity, used the utmost diligence to retrieve the affairs of his country. The shattered gallies were speedily refitted, and again prepared, to the number of an hundred and ten, to risk the event of a battle. As they had suffered greatly, on former occasions, by the hardness and heaviness of the Syracusan prows, Nicias provided them with grappling-irons, fitted to prevent the recoil of their opponents, and the repetition of the hostile stroke. The decks were crowded with armed men, and the contrivance to which the enemy had hitherto chiefly owed their success, of introducing the firmness and stability of a

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military, into a naval engagement, was adopted in its full extent by the Athenians. When the fleet was ready for sea, Nicias recalled the troops from the various posts and fortresses still occupied by their arms, and formed them into one camp on the shore, where, on the day of battle, their ranks might be extended as widely as the vicinity of the Syracusan ramparts could safely permit, that a spacious retreat might be secured to the Athenian ships, if persecuted by their usual bad fortune; in which fatal alternative, nothing remained but to retire by land with the miserable remnant of the army. But Nicias did not yet despair, that the last efforts of his countrymen would break the enemy's chain at the mouth of the Great Harbour; and that they would return victorious, to transport their encamped companions to the friendly ports of Naxos and Catana.

Both sides prepare for battle.

Elated by this hope, he forgot his bodily infirmities, and suppressed the anguish of his soul. With a serene and magnanimous firmness, he cheered the dejection of the Athenians, exhorting them, before they embarked, by an affecting and manly speech, "to remember the vicissitudes of war, and the instability of fortune.[19] Though hitherto unsuccessful, they had every thing to expect from the strength of their actual preparations; nor ought men, who had tried and surmounted so many dangers, to yield to the weak prejudices of unexperienced folly, and cloud the prospect of future victory by the gloomy remembrance of past defeat. They yet enjoyed an

[19] Thucydid. p. 655. et seq.

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opportunity to defend their lives, their liberty, their friends, their country, and the mighty name of Athens; an opportunity which never could return, since the whole fortune of the republic was embarked in the present fleet." When Gylippus and the Syracusan commanders were apprised of the designs of the enemy, they hastened to the defence of the bar which had been thrown across the entrance of the harbour. It is uncertain for what reason they had left open one narrow passage[20], on either side of which they stationed a powerful squadron. Gylippus animated the sailors with such topics, as the occasion naturally suggested, and returned to take the conduct of the land forces, leaving Sicanus, Agatharcus, and Pythen, the two first to command the wings, and the last, a citizen of Corinth, to command the centre, of the Syracusan fleet, which fell short of the Athenian by the number of twenty gallies. But the former was admirably provided with whatever seemed most necessary for attack or for defence; even the Athenian grappling-irons had not been overlooked; to elude the dangerous grasp of these instruments, the prows of the Syracusan vessels were covered with wet and slippery hides.

Naval engagement in the Great Harbour.

Before the Athenians set sail, Nicias, that nothing might be neglected to obtain success, went round the whole armament, addressing, in the most pathetic terms, the several commanders by name, recalling to them the objects most dear

[20] Διὰ τὸν στόμα τοῦ λιμένος ἐλαφρόν. Thucydid. p. 451.

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and most respectable, which they were engaged by every tie of honour and affection to defend, and conjuring them, by their families, their friends, and their paternal gods, to exert whatever skill or courage they collectively, or as individuals, possessed, on this ever memorable and most important occasion. He then returned to the camp with an enfeebled body and an anxious mind, committing the last hope of the republic to the active valour of Demosthenes, Eudemus, and Menander. The first impression of the Athenians was irresistible; they burst through the passage of the bar, and repelled the squadrons on either side. As the entrance widened, the Syracusans, in their turn, rushed into the harbour, which was more favourable than the open sea to their mode of fighting. Thither the foremost of the Athenians returned, either compelled by superior force, or that they might assist their companions. The engagement became general in the mouth of the harbour; and in this narrow space two hundred gallies fought, during the greatest part of the day, with an obstinate and persevering valour. It would require the expressive energy of Thucydides, and the imitative, though inimitable, sounds and expressions of the Grecian tongue, to describe the noise, the tumult, and the ardour of the contending squadrons. The battle was not long confined to the shock of adverse prows, and to the distant hostility of darts and arrows. The nearest vessels grappled, and closed with each other, and their decks were soon converted into a field of blood. While the

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heavy-armed troops boarded the enemy's ships, they left their own exposed to a similar misfortune; the fleets were divided into massive clusters of adhering gallies; and the confusion of their mingled shouts overpowered the voice of authority; the Athenians exhorting, not to abandon an element on which their republic had ever acquired victory and glory, for the dangerous protection of an hostile shore; and the Syracusans encouraging each other not to fly from an enemy, whose weakness or cowardice had long meditated flight.[21] CHAP. XX.

The singular and tremendous spectacle of an engagement more fierce and obstinate than any that had ever been beheld in the Grecian seas, restrained the activity, and totally suspended the powers, of the numerous and adverse battalions which encircled the coast. The spectators and the actors were equally interested in the important scene; but the former, the current of whose sensibility was undiverted by any exertion of mind or body, felt more deeply, and expressed more forcibly, the various emotions by which they were agitated.[22] Hope, fear, the shouts of victory, the shrieks of despair, the anxious solicitude of doubtful success, animated the countenances, the voice, and the gesture of the Athenians, whose whole reliance centered in their fleet. When at length their gallies evidently gave way on every side, the contrast of alternate, and the rapid tumult of successive, The Athenians defeated.

[21] Thucydid. p. 543. et seq. [22] Id. p. 544.

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passions, subsided in a melancholy calm. This dreadful pause of astonishment and terror was followed by the disordered trepidation of flight and fear: many escaped to the camp: others ran, uncertain whither to direct their steps: while Nicias, with a small, but undismayed band, remained on the shore, to protect the landing of their unfortunate gallies. But the retreat of the Athenians could not probably have been effected, had it not been favoured by the actual circumstances of the enemy, as well as by the peculiar prejudices of ancient superstition. In this well-fought battle, the vanquished had lost fifty, and the victors forty, vessels. It was incumbent on the latter to employ their immediate and most strenuous efforts to recover the dead bodies of their friends, that they might be honoured with the sacred and indispensable rites of funeral. The day was far spent; the strength of the sailors had been exhausted by a long continuance of unremitting labour; and both they, and their companions on shore, were more desirous to return to Syracuse to enjoy the fruits of victory, than to irritate the dangerous despair of the vanquished Athenians. [23]

Their extreme despondency.

It is observed by the Roman orator [24], with no less truth than elegance, that not only the navy of Athens, but the glory and the empire of that republic, suffered shipwreck in the fatal harbour of Syracuse. The despondent degeneracy which immediately followed this ever memorable en-

[23] Thucydid. p. 548.

[24] Cic. in Verr. v. 37.

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gagement was testified in the neglect of a duty which the Athenians had never neglected before, and in renouncing a part of their national character, which it had hitherto been their greatest glory to maintain. They abandoned to insult and indignity the bodies of the slain; and when it was proposed to them by their commanders to prepare next day for a second engagement, since their vessels were still more numerous than those of the enemy, they, who had seldom avoided a superior, and who had never declined the encounter of an equal force, declared that no motive could induce them to withstand the weaker armament of Syracuse. Their only desire was to escape by land, under cover of the night, from a foe whom they had not courage to oppose, and from a place where every object was offensive to their sight, and most painful to their reflection.[25] CHAP. XX.

The behaviour of the Syracusans promised complete success to this design. The evening after the battle was the vigil of the feast of Hercules; and the still agitated combatants awakened, after a short and feverish repose, to celebrate the memory of their favourite hero, to whose propitious influence they probably ascribed the merit of the most splendid trophy that ever adorned the fame of Syracuse. From the triumph of victory, and grateful emotions of religious enthusiasm, there was an easy transition, in the creed and in the practice of the Greeks, to the extravagance of licentious joy, and the excesses The Syracusans celebrate the festival of Hercules with licentious joy.

[25] Thucydid. p. 545.

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of sensual indulgence. Sports, processions, music, dancing, the pleasures of the table, of the elegant arts, and of unguarded conversation, were incorporated in the texture of their religious worship. But the coincidence of a festival and a victory demanded an accumulated profusion of such enjoyments as soothe the senses and please the fancy. Amidst these giddy transports, the Syracusans lost all remembrance of an enemy whom they despised; even the soldiers on guard joined the dissolute or frivolous amusements of their companions; and, during the greatest part of the night, Syracuse presented a mixed scene of secure gaiety, of thoughtless jollity, and of mad and most dangerous licence.[26]

Stratagem of Hermocrates to prevent the Athenian retreat.

The firm and vigilant mind of Hermocrates alone withstood, but was unable to divert, the general current. It was impossible to rouse to the fatigues of war men buried in wine and pleasure, and intoxicated with victory; and, as he could not intercept by force, he determined to retard by stratagem, the intended retreat of the Athenians, whose numbers and resentment would still render them formidable to whatever part of Sicily they might remove their camp. A select band of horsemen, assuming the character of traitors, fearlessly approached the hostile ramparts, and warned the Athenians of the danger of departing that night, as many ambuscades lurked in the way, and all the most important passes were occupied by the enemy. The frequency of treason gained credit to the

[26] Thucydid. p 546.

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perfidious advice; and the Athenians, having changed their first resolution, were persuaded by Nicias to wait two days longer, that such measures might be taken as seemed best adapted to promote the safety and celerity of their march.[27] CHAP. XX.

The camp was raised on the third morning after the battle. Forty thousand men, of whom many were afflicted with wounds and disease, and all exhausted by fatigue, and dejected by calamity, exhibited the appearance, not of a flying army, but of a great and populous community, driven from their ancient habitations by the cruel vengeance of a conqueror. They had miserably fallen from the lofty expectations with which they sailed in triumph to the harbour of Syracuse. They had abandoned their gallies, their transports, the hopes of victory, and the glory of the Athenian name; and these collective sufferings were enhanced and exasperated by the painful images which struck the eyes and the fancy of each unfortunate individual. The mangled bodies of their companions and friends, deprived of the sacred rites of funeral, affected them with a sentiment of religious horror, on which the weakness of human nature was happily unable to dwell. Their minds recoiled from the dreadful thought, but they could not divert their compassion from the numerous crowds of sick and wounded, who followed them with enfeebled and unequal steps, intreating, in the accent and attitude of unutterable anguish, to be delivered

The Athenians raise their camp.

Their dreadful afflictions.

[27] Thucydid. p. 547.

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from the misery of famine, or the rage of an exasperated foe. Amidst such afflicting scenes, the heart of a stranger would have melted with tender sympathy; but what must the Athenians have felt, to see in this hopeless state, their parents, brothers, children, and friends! to hear, without the possibility of relieving, their lamentable complaints! and reluctantly to throw the clinging victims from their wearied necks and arms! Yet the care of personal safety prevailed over every other care; for the soldiers, either destitute of slaves, or distrusting their fidelity, were not only encumbered by their armour, but oppressed by the weight of their provisions.[28]

Melancholy firmness of Nicias.

The superior rank of Nicias entitled him to a pre-eminence of toil and of woe; and he deserves the regard of posterity by his character and sufferings, and still more by the melancholy firmness of his conduct. The load of accumulated disasters did not sink him into inactive despondency. He moved with a rapid pace around every part of the army, and the ardour of his mind re-animating the languor of his debilitated frame, he exclaimed, with a loud and distinct voice, "Athenians and allies! do not yet despair. Many have escaped from still greater evils. As to myself, who, in bodily strength, surpass not the weakest among you (for you see to what a miserable condition my malady has reduced me), and who, in the happiness of private life, and

[28] Thucydid. p. 548.

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the deceitful gifts of prosperity, had long been distinguished above the most illustrious of my contemporaries, I am now confounded in affliction with the meanest and most worthless. Yet am I unconscious of deserving such a fatal reverse of fortune. My conduct towards men has been irreproachable; my piety towards the gods conspicuous and sincere. For this reason, I am still animated with confidence; calamities, unmerited by guilt, are disarmed of their terrors. If we have incurred the indignation of the gods by our ambitious designs against Sicily, our offence, surely, is sufficiently expiated by past sufferings, which now render us the objects of compassion. Other nations have attacked their neighbours with less provocation, and have yet escaped with a gentler punishment; nor will experience warrant the belief, that, for the errors of human frailty, Providence should impose penalties too heavy to be borne. We have less reason to adopt an impious prejudice so dishonourable to the gods, when we consider the means of defence which their goodness has yet left us. Our numbers, our resolution, and even our misfortunes, still render us formidable. There is not any army in Sicily able to intercept our course; much less to expel us from the first friendly territory in which we may fix our camp. If we can secure, therefore, our present safety, by a prudent, speedy, and courageous retreat, we may afterwards retrieve our lost honour, and restore the fallen glory of Athens; since the chief ornament

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of a state consists in brave and virtuous men, not in empty ships and undefended walls."[29]

The retreat of the Athenians.

The actions of Nicias fully corresponded with his words. He neglected none of the duties of a great general. Instead of leading the army towards Naxos and Catana, in which direction there was reason to apprehend many secret ambushes of the enemy, he conducted them by the western route towards Gela and Camerina; expecting, by this measure, to find provisions in greater plenty, as well as to elude the latent snares of the Syracusans. That nothing might be omitted which promised the hope of relief, messengers were immediately dispatched to the neighbouring cities, which might possibly be tempted by their natural jealousy of the growing prosperity of Syracuse, to favour the retreat of the vanquished. The troops were then divided into two squares, as the most secure and capacious arrangement. Nicias led the van; Demosthenes conducted the rear; the baggage, and unarmed multitude, occupied the centre. In this order of march they passed the river Anapus, the ford of which was feebly disputed by an inconsiderable guard; and, having proceeded the first day only five miles, they encamped in the evening on a rising ground, after being much harassed during the latter part of their journey by the Syracusan cavalry and archers, who galled them at a distance, intercepted the stragglers, and avoided, by a seasonable retreat, to

[29] Thucydid. p. 550.

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commit the security of their own fortune with the dangerous despair of the Athenians. Next day, having marched only twenty furlongs, they reached a spacious plain, the convenience of which invited them to repose; especially as they needed a supply of water and provisions, which might be easily obtained from the surrounding country.[30] CHAP. XX.

Before this time, the enemy were apprised of their line of march; and, in order to interrupt it, they sent a numerous detachment to fortify the mountain of Acræum. This mountain, which probably gave name to the small town situate in its neighbourhood, intersected the direct road to Gela and Camerina. It was distant a few miles from the Athenian encampment, and a small degree of art might render it impregnable, since it was of a steep and rapid ascent, and encompassed on every side by the rocky channel of a loud and foaming torrent. In vain the Athenians attempted, on three successive days, to force the passage. They were repelled with loss in every new attack, which became more feeble than the preceding. In the first and most desperate, an accidental storm of thunder increased the courage of the Syracusans, and the terror of the Athenians. A similar event had, in the first engagement after the invasion of Sicily, produced an opposite effect on the contending nations. But the hopes and the fears of men change with their fortune. Interrupted by the enemy.

In the evening after the last unsuccessful con-

[30] Thucydid. p. 552. et seq.

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Change their line of march.

test, the condition of the Athenians was peculiarly deplorable. The numbers of the wounded had been increased by the fruitless attempts to pass the mountain; the enemy had continually galled and insulted them as they retreated to their camp; the adjacent territory could no longer supply them with the necessaries of life; and they must be compelled, after all their hardships and fatigues, to make a long circuit by the sea-shore, if they expected to reach, in safety, the places of their respective destination. Even this resolution (for there was no alternative), however dreadful to men in their comfortless and exhausted state, was recommended by Nicias, who, to conceal his design from the enemy, caused innumerable fires to be lighted in every part of the camp.[31] The troops then marched out under cover of the night, and in the same order which they had hitherto observed. But they had not proceeded far in this nocturnal expedition, when the obscurity of the skies, the deceitful tracks of an unknown and hostile country, filled the more timid or unfortunate with imaginary terrors. Their panic, as is usual in great bodies of men, was speedily communicated to those around them; and Demosthenes, with above one half of his division, fatally mistook the road, and quitted, never more to rejoin, the rest of the army.

The division commanded by Demos-

The scouts of Gylippus and the Syracusans immediately brought intelligence of this important event, which furnished an opportunity

[31] Thucydid. p. 552. et seq.

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to attack the divided strength of the Athenians. His superior knowledge of the country enabled Gylippus, by the celerity of his march, to intercept the smaller division, and to surround them on every side, in the difficult and intricate defiles which led to the ford of the river Erinois. There, he inflicted on them wounds and death, during a whole day, with darts, arrows, and javelins. When the measure of their sufferings was complete, he proclaimed towards the evening, by the sound of the trumpet, and with the loud voice of the herald, freedom, forgiveness, and protection to all who should desert and abandon the bad fortune of their leaders; an offer which was accepted by the troops of several Asiatic islands, and other dependent and tributary countries. At length he entered into treaty with Demosthenes himself, whose soldiers laid down their arms, and delivered their money (which filled the capacious hollow of four broad bucklers), on condition that they should not suffer death, imprisonment, or famine.[32] Notwithstanding the number of the deserters and of the slain, the remainder still amounted to six thousand, who were sent to Syracuse with their captive general, under a powerful and vigilant escort, while the activity of Gylippus followed the flying battalions of the enemy, which had been conducted by Nicias to the distance of twenty miles, towards the fatal banks of the river Assinaros.

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thenes surrenders to Gylippus.

The Syracusans overtook the rear before the

The division under

[32] Thucydid. p. 553

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van could arrive at the lofty and abrupt margin of this rapid stream: and an herald was sent to Nicias, exhorting him to imitate the example of his colleague, and to surrender, without farther bloodshed, to the irresistible valour of his victorious pursuers. Nicias disbelieved, or affected to disbelieve, the report: but when a confidential messenger, whom he was allowed to dispatch for information, brought certain intelligence of the surrender and disgrace of Demosthenes, he also condescended to propose terms, in the name of the Athenians, engaging, on the immediate cessation of hostilities, to reimburse the magistrates of Syracuse for the expence of the war, and to deliver Athenian hostages (a citizen for a talent) until the debt should be liquidated.[33]

Nicias overtaken by the enemy.

Their melancholy defence.

These terms were rejected by the Syracusans with disdain: and Gylippus having occupied the most advantageous posts on every side, attacked the army of Nicias with the same mode of warfare, which, two days before, had proved so destructive to their unfortunate companions. During the whole day they bore, with extraordinary patience, the hostile assault, still expecting, under cover of the night, to escape the cruel vigilance of the enemy. But that hope was vain: Gylippus perceived their departure; and although three hundred men of determined courage gallantly broke through the guards, and effected their escape, the rest were no sooner discovered than they returned to their former station, and laid down their arms in silent despair.

[33] Thucydid. p. 554.

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Yet the return of the morning brought back their courage. They again took up their arms, and marched towards the river, miserably galled and afflicted by the hostile archers and cavalry. Their distress was most lamentable and incurable: yet hope did not totally forsake them; for like men in the oppression and languor of a consuming disease, they still entertained a confused idea, that their sufferings would end, could they but reach the opposite banks of the neighbouring river.[34]

Horrid scene on the banks of the Assinaros.

The desire of assuaging their thirst encouraged this daring design. They rushed with frantic disorder into the rapid current; the pursuing Syracusans, who had occupied the rocky banks, destroying them with innumerable volleys of missile weapons. In the Assinaros they had a new enemy to contend with. The depth and force of the waters triumphed over their single, and shook their implicated strength. Many were borne down the stream. At length the weight of their numbers resisted the violence of the torrent; but a new form of danger and of horror presented itself to the eyes of Nicias. His soldiers turned their fury against each other, disputing at the point of the sword, the unwholesome draughts of the agitated and turbid river. This spectacle melted the firmness of his manly soul. He surrendered to Gylippus, and asked quarter for the miserable remnant of his troops, who had not perished in the Assinaros, or been destroyed by the Syracusan archers and cavalry.[35] Before the commands of the Lacedæmonian general

[34] Thucydid. p. 534. [35] Ibid p. 555.

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could pervade the army, many of the soldiers had, according to the barbarous practice of the age, seized their prisoners and slaves; so that the Athenian captives were afterwards distributed among several communities of Sicily, which had sent assistance to Syracuse. The rest, upon laying down their arms, were entitled to the pity and protection of Gylippus; who, after he had sent proper detachments to intercept and collect the stragglers, returned in triumph to the capital with the inestimable trophies of his valour and conduct.

Death of the Athenian generals.

Nicias had little to expect from the *humanity* of a proud and victorious Spartan; but Demosthenes might naturally flatter himself with the hope of *justice*. He urged with energy, but urged in vain, the observance of the capitulation which had been ratified with due forms, on the faith of which he had surrendered himself and the troops entrusted to his command. The public prisoners, conducted successively to Syracuse, and exceeding together the number of seven thousand, were treated with the same inhuman cruelty. They were universally condemned to labour in the mines and quarries of Sicily[36]: their whole sustenance was bread and water: they suffered alternately the ardours of a scorching sun, and the chilling damps of autumn. For seventy days and nights they languished in this dreadful captivity, during which, the diseases incident to their manner of life were rendered infectious by the stench of the dead bodies, which corrupted the purity of the surrounding air. At length an eternal

Cruel treatment of the captives.

[36] Thucydid. p. 556.

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separation was made between those who should enjoy the happier lot of being sold as slaves into distant lands, and those who should for ever be confined to their terrible dungeons. The Athenians, with such Italians and Sicilians as had unnaturally embraced their cause, were reserved for the latter doom. Their generals, Nicias and Demosthenes, had not lived to behold this melancholy hour. Gylippus would have spared their lives, not from any motives of humanity and esteem, but that his joyous return to Sparta might have been graced by their presence. But the resentment of the Syracusans, the fears of the Corinthians; above all, the suspicious jealousy of those perfidious traitors who had maintained a secret correspondence with Nicias, which they dreaded, lest the accidents of his future life might disclose, loudly demanded the immediate execution of the captive generals.[37] The Athenians of those times justly regretted the loss of Demosthenes, a gallant and enterprising commander; but posterity will for ever lament the fate of Nicias, the most pious, the most virtuous, and the most unfortunate man of the age in which he lived.

A singular exception to this general cruelty.

Amidst this dark and dreadful scene of cruelty and revenge, we must not omit to mention one singular example of humanity, which broke forth like a meteor in the gloom of a nocturnal tempest. The Syracusans, who could punish their helpless captives with such relentless severity, had often melted into tears at the affecting strains of Euripides[38], an Athenian poet, who had learned in

[37] Thucydid. l. vii. ad fin.

[38] See above, p. 140.

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the Socratic school to adorn the lessons of philosophy with the charms of fancy, and who was regarded by the taste of his contemporaries, as he still is by many enlightened judges, as the most tender and pathetic, the most philosophical and instructive, of all tragic writers. The pleasure which the Syracusans had derived from his inimitable poetry, made them long to hear it rehearsed by the flexible voices and harmonious pronunciation of the Athenians, so unlike, and so superior, to the rudeness and asperity of their own Doric dialect. They desired their captives to repeat the plaintive scenes of their favourite bard. The captives obeyed; and, affecting to represent the woes of ancient kings and heroes, they too faithfully expressed their own. Their taste and sensibility endeared them to the Syracusans, who unlinked their bonds, received them with kindness into their families[39], and, after treating them with all the honourable distinctions of ancient hospitality, restored them to their longing and afflicted country, as a small but precious wreck of the most formidable armament that had ever sailed from a Grecian harbour. At their return to Athens, the grateful captives walked in solemn procession to the house of Euripides, whom they hailed as their deliverer from slavery and death.[40] This acknowledgment, infinitely more honourable than all the crowns and splendour that ever surrounded

[39] Ητοι τεθνηκεν η διδασκει γραμματα, "he is either dead or rehearsing verses:" an expression first introduced at this time, was afterwards applied proverbially, in speaking of travellers in foreign countries, whose fate was uncertain.

[40] Plutarch. in Nicia.

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the person, and even than all the altars and temples that ever adorned the memory of a poet[41], must have transported Euripides with the *second* triumph which the heart of man can feel. He would have enjoyed the *first*, if his countrymen had owed to his virtues the tribute which they paid to his talents; and if, instead of the beauty and elegance of his verses, they had been saved by his probity, his courage, or his patriotism; qualities which, still more than genius and fancy, constitute the real excellence and dignity of human nature.

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[41] See above, Chapter VI.

THE END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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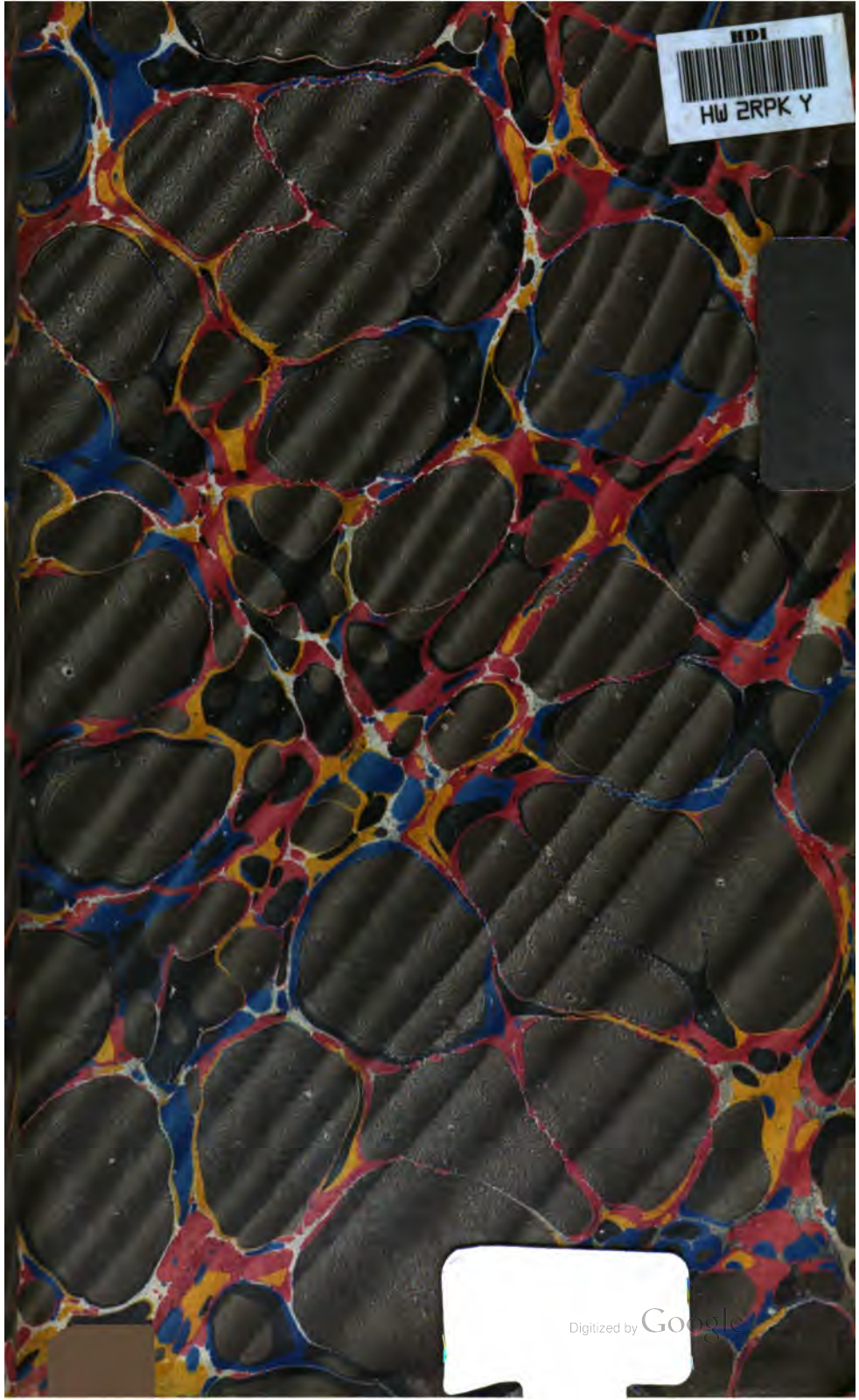
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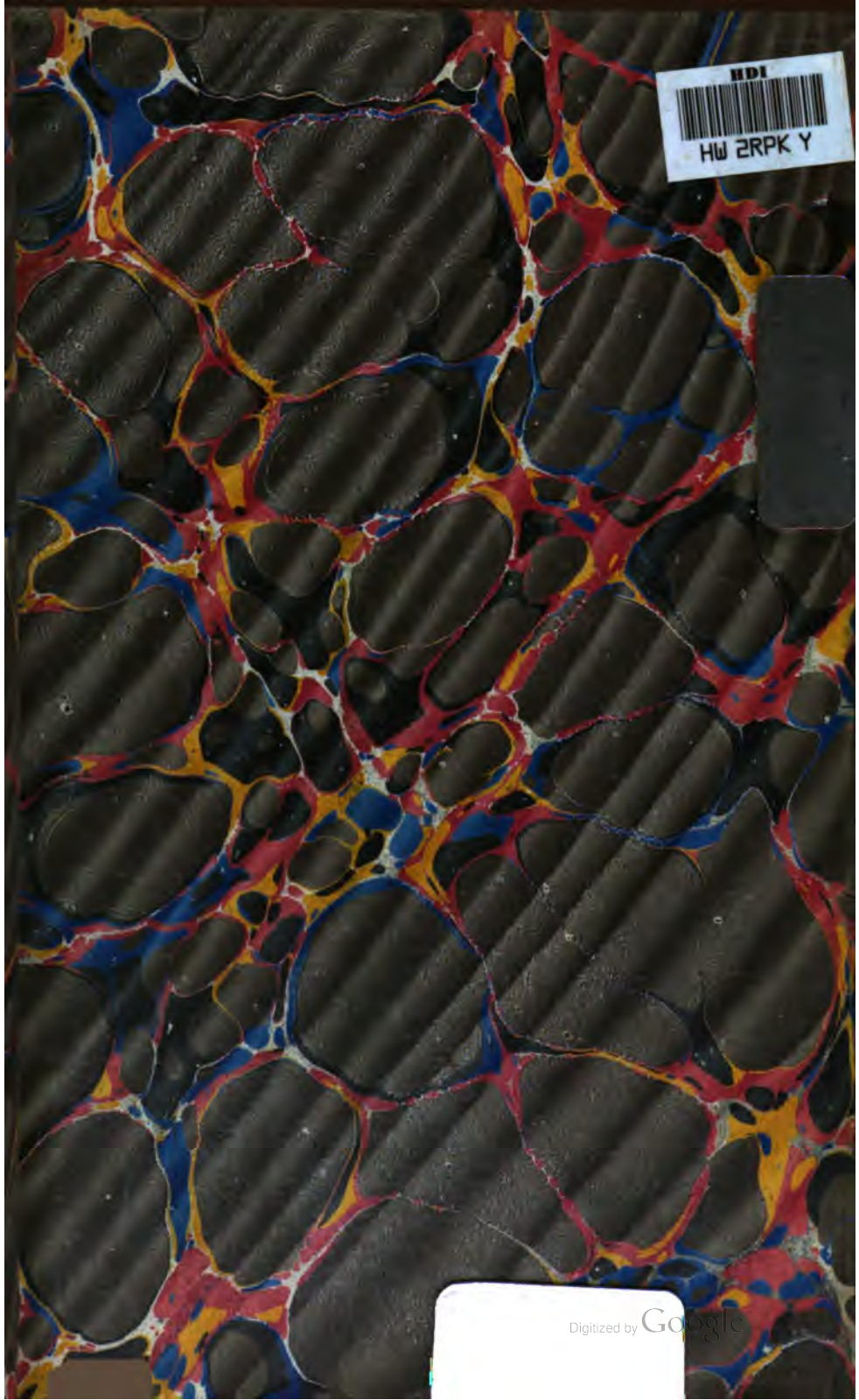
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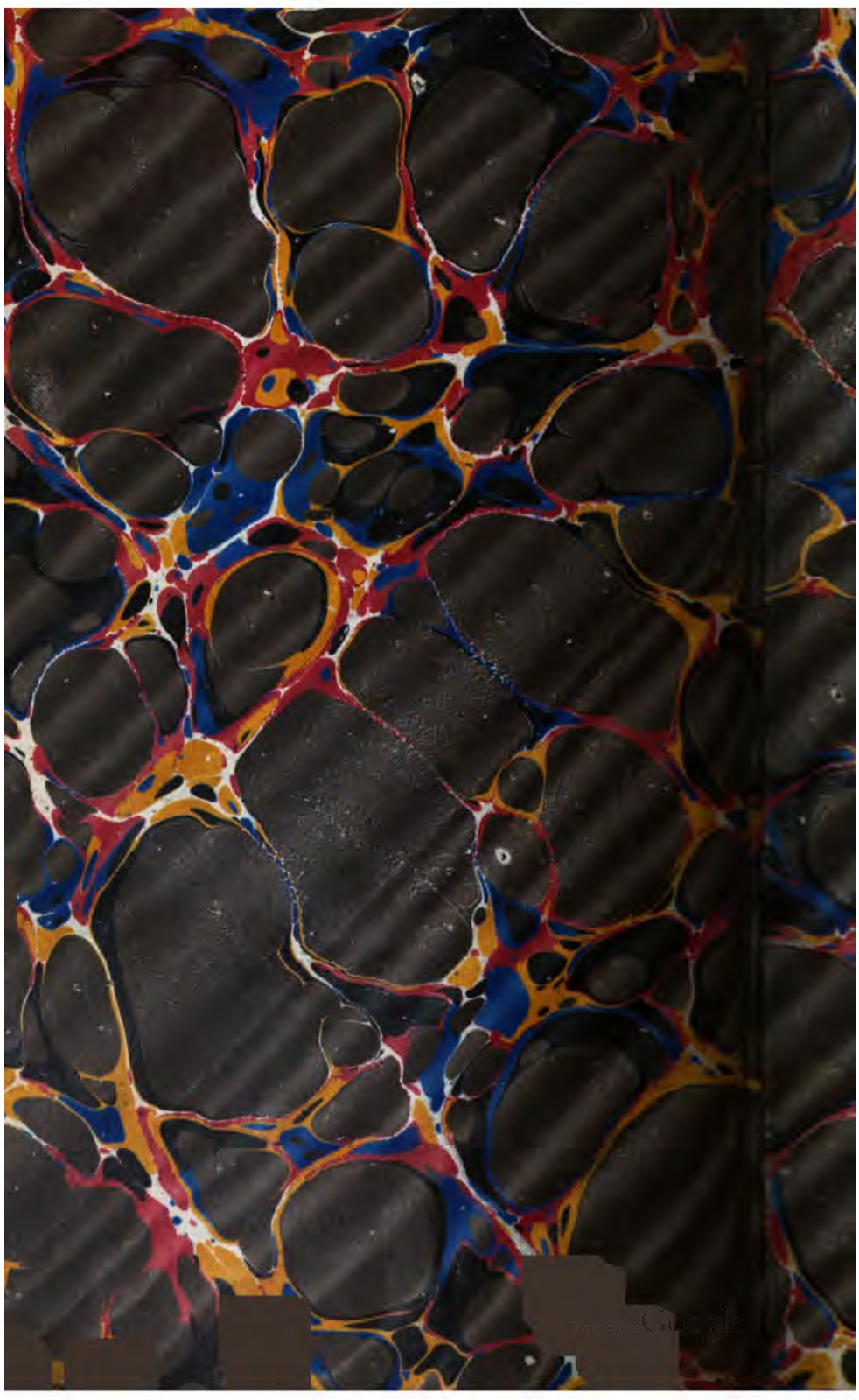
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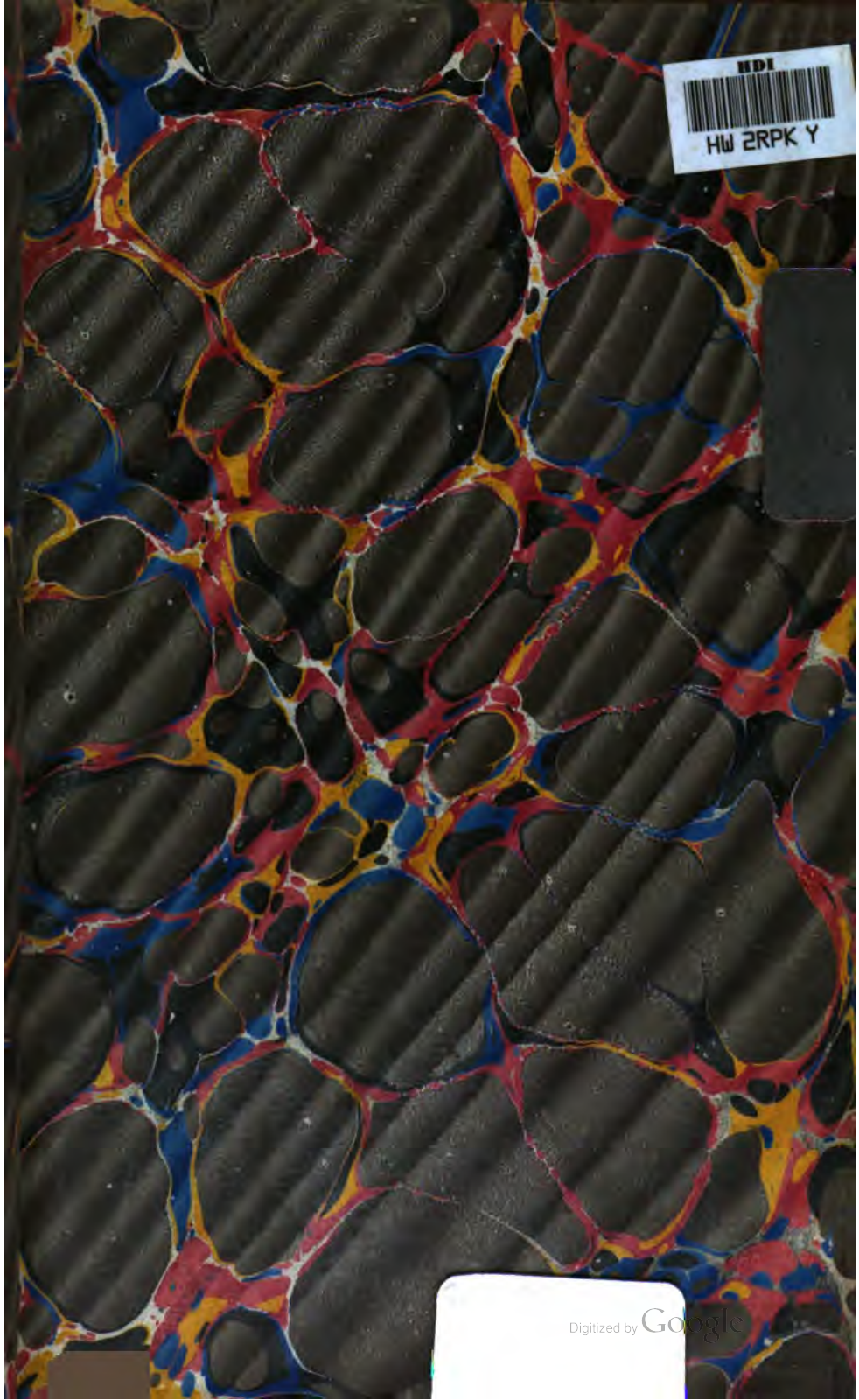

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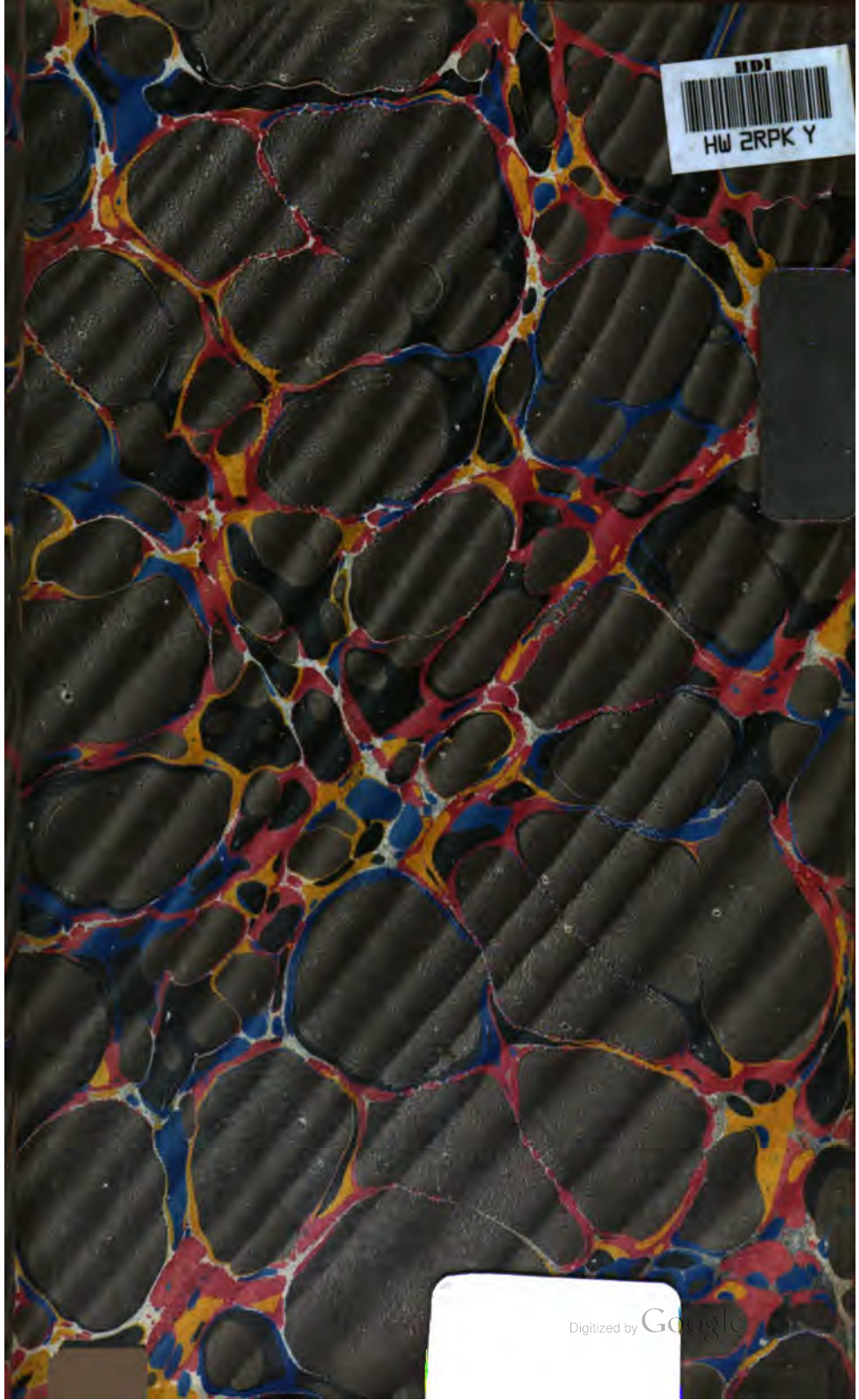

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